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CONTENTS

OMMENTS . . . . Page 329
MERICAN OPINION. By Kingsley Martin 330
HE CASE OF ADMIRAL DARLAN . . . 331
ONOPOLISTS PROPOSE 331
COLONIAL CHARTER. By Dr. Rita Hinden 332
LONDON DIARY. By Harold J. Laski . 333
HIS ENGLAND. 334
OW WE ARE SEVEN. By Sagittarius . . 334
NPROMISED ISLAND. By Maurice Cranston 334
N AND OUT OF BED. By Y. Y. . . . 335
DUTY RUN. By Squadron-Leader Derek Verschoyle 335
CRUMBS OF COMFORT FOR LORD WARDINGTON. By Reginald Reynolds . . . 337
THE MOVIES. By William Whitebait . . 338
PLAYS AND PICTURES 338
CORRESPONDENCE 338
From R. St. John Reade; F. V. Pickstock; Margaret Fells; Joyce Peppiette; Walter Auerbach; W. G. Clouter; Arnold Whittick; and others.
Page
BOOKS IN GENERAL. By G. W. Stonier . 341
REVIEWS:
Egyptian Variety. By James Strachey . 342
Perfide Albion. By George Orwell. . 342
The Making of Petersburg. By Raymond Mortimer 343
In Praise of England. By C. E. M. Joad 344
Barbary 345
WEEK-END COMPETITIONS 346

THE FRUITS OF AFRICAN SUCCESS

By far the most eloquent commentary on the uccesses of the United Nations in Africa may ave come, not from Westminster or Washington, ut from Madrid. Its author is General Franco nd it has taken the form of a partial mobilisation or the defence of the neutrality of Spain against ll comers. Suspicion is no doubt the proper ttitude in the face of an event as surprising as his, but our own tentative reading of it is that General Franco may possibly mean precisely what he has said. Is the calling up of this army, quipped with German and Italian weapons, ntended primarily to deter Hitler from sending he army hastily massed in Southern France cross the Pyrennees? Does this gesture mean hat if a dash by land on Gibraltar should figure n the plans of the German General Staff, Franco would in that event forget his debt to those who laced him where he is and would call in the United Nations to help him defend his somewhat ecent neutrality? That he would also resist an nprovoked Anglo-American landing may be ssumed, but he has been assured in advance that othing of that kind shall happen.

Another reading of this precautionary move is, oubtless, possible. It might be designed merely o gain time, until a couple of German Panzer Divisions could by collusion reach Madrid. For rooked conduct in one direction or the other e have to be prepared. We incline, however, o think in retrospect that the dismissal of Señor uñer may have marked a turning point in Franco's policy. But our chief reason for inlining to a favourable interpretation rests on a olid fact. While General Eisenhower was nding his troops at ports scattered along the wo coasts of the Atlantic and Mediterranean, big and relatively well-equipped Spanish army ncluding a number of German tourists and chnicians, stood passive and indifferent in panish Morocco, on the African coast of the traits, which its big guns commanded. We rgue that if Franco were still, what he was a few onths ago, Hitler's non-belligerent ally, this rmy would have been used against us, and given s position might have been used with considerble effect. On this hypothesis, it is arguable hat a little less openly and decidedly than Admiral Darlan, M. Flandin and other leading Fascists, General Franco has rallied to the victors. The process may have been assisted by substantial economic arguments. In his Guildhall speech, Mr. Churchill promised that after the war, together with the United States, we "will do all that we can to enrich the economic life of the Peninsula." In other words, the resources of the United Nations may be used after the war to maintain Franco in power. As in the distressing case of Admiral Darlan, this deal if it has been concluded, would certainly promise us considerable military advantages. But it would mean a patchwork Europe, after the war part slave, part free. "Variety, not monotony," as Sir Samuel Hoare put it, "is what we desire in Europe." For our own part, we have seen so little freedom there of late that we could endure the prospect of its triumph over the entire continent.

Last week the centre of interest lay in the movements which the commanders of the United Nations had carried out from El Alamein to Casablanca—an epic of brilliant planning and prolonged preparation. These movements continue. General Montgomery's forces are pursuing the broken remnants of Rommel's army along two roads to the port of Benghazi, where they may conceivably attempt a brief delaying stand. Simultaneously from the West two columns are marching into Tunisia—one British, under General Anderson, in the north, which is making for Bizerta; the other mainly American, farther south, which may be heading for Sfax or Gabes, not far from the frontier of Tripoli. But the chief interest this week lies in the enemy's counter-moves. So far as they are known, they contain no element of surprise. They are the conventional replies which our own strategists had expected. He anticipated, doubtless correctly, that when the occupation of North Africa is completed, a second expedition may one day sail from Oran and Algiers to the Mediterranean coast of France. Accordingly, three columns, moving at high speed, violated the hitherto unoccupied zone. These forces hold Marseilles and are camped around Toulon. The protest of Marshal Pétain was merely verbal: he seems to be as closely bound to the policy of collaboration as ever, who has now in effect abdicated to Laval, the avowed tool of his German masters. The officers of the Fleet held a meeting at which they took the decision to remain passively at their anchorages at Toulon, where they are at the mercy of the German aviators. The men, who may have wished to sail for Africa, were confined to their quarters aboard ship. The Italians, feeling apparently no great elation, were allowed at last to realise some of their territorial ambitions, by occupying Corsica, Nice and Savoy. Over the Alps, meanwhile, many trainloads of German troops are said to have poured into Italy, destined, perhaps, to strengthen the defences of Sardinia and Sicily.

The next struggle will be for the control of the Sicilian narrows, and it will be fought on sea, land and in the air. The Germans have sent northwards, presumably from Tripoli, their squadrons of troop-carrying planes, some of which we shot down into the sea. With these and with parachute troops, they are seizing the French airfields, which our bombers are trying to put out of action. Probably a much bigger force—it is said of 10,000 men—has arrived or will soon arrive by sea. It may already be installed in Bizerta. To cover these operations it is reported that what is left of the Italian Fleet has ventured out to sea. The narrows dominated by the Axis from both shores will be for a time more completely closed to us than ever before—but only for a time. Our two columns, preceded by parachute troops, are marching on these same airfields and above all on Bizerta. So far from having to expect even the token resistance which they encountered from the French garrisons of Morocco and Algeria, they will find the garrison of Tunisia already resisting the German invaders. The prospect for a successful occupation of Tunisia seems good. Much the more formidable enterprise that lies ahead will be the invasion of Sicily, for the Germans have had ample time to fortify it and dig themselves in. If we had planned our political strokes as boldly as our military measures, we should have had ready to share in this enterprise a Free Italian legion, which might have revived the tradition of Garibaldi's Thousand—the last body of invaders to capture this often-invaded island. We feel confident that Generals Anderson and Montgomery will prove equal to their task. They have to take first of all Tunis and then Tripoli with the entire African coast: thereafter comes the crucial adventure across the narrow waters, with heroic Malta as the third base.

Two Doors Closed

Lord Linlithgow, after an interview with Mr. Rajagopalachari, has taken the grave decision to refuse him leave to visit Mr. Gandhi. The story as the Delhi correspondent of the *Times* told it last Friday is deeply disquieting. Mr. Rajagopalachari had previously had a lengthy talk with Mr. Jinnah. What passed between them is a secret, but rightly or wrongly Mr. Rajagopalachari believed that something had emerged which might hopefully be laid before the leaders of Congress. Reading between the lines, we should suppose that a formula had been hammered out to which Mr. Jinnah would assent, but only if Mr. Gandhi would simultaneously agree. We are told that Mr. Jinnah is as disappointed as Mr. Rajagopalachari by the Viceroy's refusal. No one with this meagre information before him can form any confident opinion upon Mr. Rajagopalachari's chances of success. All one can say is that the ex-Premier of Madras is a sober and able man, better acquainted than anyone in the Viceregal Lodge can possibly be with the workings of Mr. Gandhi's mind. It is easy to criticise the recent conduct of Congress, but its harshest critics would admit that without it there can be no settlement of this Indian deadlock. It seems to us that a fair chance of a settlement has been thrown away. But this is not the only door that has been closed. Mr. Amery has been as discouraging as the Viceroy to Mr. Rajagopalachari's other proposal—that he should visit London, if he can get a passport and a plane. Mr. Amery's answer to a written question on this subject may not be a final refusal, but the statement that he sees "no advantage" in this proposal would seem to mean that a visit to London would be useless, since no new light on the situation which the visitor could produce would persuade this immovable Secretary of State to change his mind.

Reconstruction and "National Unity"

Reconstruction policy is the theme of the Labour Party's amendment to the Address at the opening of the new parliamentary session. One wonders whether the adoption of a definite policy in this field has been brought nearer or made more unlikely by the new phase on which the war has entered. The greater immediacy with which most people are now disposed to regard the problems of the post-war world cuts both ways; for a greater urgency to settle something has to contend with an increased reluctance to make provisions which may have to be soon fulfilled. It has been made plain officially more than once that in the view of the present Cabinet plans for reconstruction ought to be of such a character as to preserve the spirit of "national unity" for a period after the war. This can surely have but one effect—the pushing away into the background of problems which cannot be solved by mutual consent of the protagonists, and the pushing into the limelight of those matters on which there is less absolute disagreement, because they do not directly affect the fundamental institutions of capitalism in any obvious way. This looks well for Sir William Beveridge; for if the Tories wish to look progressive without giving away any of the key positions of economic power, the obvious line for them is to bid high in terms of social services and thus draw public attention away from the basic problems of economic control, such as are raised by the industrialists' manifesto on which we comment elsewhere. They will also probably, like the industrialists, bid fairly high in terms of education, or, rather, of certain kinds of education, and will endeavour, in doing so, to protect such strongholds of the class system as the "public" schools from indirect democratic assault. It will not be at all surprising if Mr. Butler is told to get ahead with his Education Bill as soon as possible, and to make it appear generous in what it concedes, or if Sir William Beveridge gets quite a lot of his report accepted by acclamation in high Tory quarters, even amid the grumbling of the less astute part of the Tory rank and file. Of course, in reality the power to provide improved social services and better education depends on success in solving the major problems of industrial production; but it is to be doubted whether that hard fact will prevent these problems from being shoved aside for fear of disturbing the national unity.

Coupons Criminology

The Ministry of Food's announcement that it is breaking the law to give one's rations away is simply silly, if it is meant as a real threat. It is, no doubt, a highly undesirable practice for customers to bribe shopkeepers or shop assistants with gifts of coupons in order to get preference in supplies of unrationed goods. But this abuse could surely be checked without making it unlawful to give away half a pound of tea, if you happen to be able to spare it. We can understand that the Ministry of Food makes its calculations of requirements on the basis of assuming, in the light of actual experience, that a certain proportion of consumers in any area will not use up the whole of their coupons, and that this calculation would be badly thrown out if all who had surplus coupons were to present them to others, who would make full use of them. We can see that anything in the nature of trading in coupons has to be prevented, and that an illicit trade could grow up if no measures were taken to stop it. But we are not prepared to believe that there is no way of preventing the growth of such a trade short of laying down a comprehensive provision which clearly cannot be enforced, and would certainly cause immense resentment if any attempt were made to enforce it on a large scale. True, households are legally allowed to pool their coupons among themselves, and it is not yet a breach of the law to offer a visitor a cup of tea. But does the Ministry mean that it is unlawful, say, for the members of a woman's institute to pool rationed goods in order to have a collective tea-party?

AMERICAN OPINION

New York, Nov. 17th.

INTELLIGENT anticipation of a British-American invasion of North Africa on a small scale was pretty wide here, but this vast armada, the result of precise planning and exact co-ordination, combined with the British success in Egypt, took everyone's breath away, and for a time has left critics of the administration gaping. Personally I was never so pleased to have been wrong about anything. The Africa campaign began just when Willkie and many others, including speakers at the great Madison Square Gardens meeting, were demanding a co-ordinated strategy and criticising the lack of a second front. Some critics in the elections attacked the efficiency of the administration, while others saw the growing danger of the great army school which wants to concentrate in the Pacific.

The battle about the size of the army continues but obviously the opening of the great African front in successful combination with Britain, winning Stalin's approval and followed by the great victory in the Solomons, changes the whole perspective. Dinner in New York on Saturday was an exciting occasion, when old friends among Italian and Spanish exiles, headed by such leaders as Sforza and del Vayo, plus a large gathering of Americans and Italians, listened to a speech promising no peace with Fascismo and appealing especially to Italian workers. Elections are always affected by progress on the battlefronts. If the naval victory in the Solomons had been earlier or the British had won in Egypt and a new African front had been opened before the elections, the administration would have done less badly. In part the Republican gains reflect the general dissatisfaction with the administration.

I found all the way on my trip across the Continent to the Pacific coast criticism of red tape and inefficiency in Washington. There is a repetition here of British mistakes—allowing too many miners to enlist, a general fuel muddle—and the same criticisms usually applied to Churchill are applied to Roosevelt, who is an autocrat, yet not decisive, and does not dismiss discredited officials. One could transpose names in British and American editorials to fit either country. The election combines people who are still at heart isolationists and who hate Roosevelt with extreme venom, and the genuine critics troubled about the errors in the conduct of the war. It is too bad that the result should be the election of Hamilton Fish and others similar to him. Certainly it is a bad omen when such men are chosen. But the British public should understand that the situation is the result of the dilemma, familiar at British bye-elections, of wanting to make a protest and being unable to do so without seeming to attack the whole administration, and thus helping its worst opponents. Speculation is rife already about the presidential campaign in 1944, which obviously depends on the success of the war. The flow towards the Republicans will not necessarily be maintained. Wendell Willkie's position arouses much interest, some holding that the world tour was mainly an elaborate political calculation, others that it was an entirely sincere effort in great world causes.

I had a long personal interview with Willkie and formed a clear impression. I had met Mr. Willkie in London during the blitz in 1940, when he was in a state of uncritical enthusiasm about the behaviour of Britain. We knew we were fine fellows, but Willkie made us blush. When I saw him this time I concluded that, though political ambition may have had much to do with planning Willkie's tour, and though it is probably again an important element in his utterances, the impulse behind all he has done during the last months was the emotional effect of seeing Russia and China at war. As far as words go, Willkie's outlook would not seem to clash very much with the aspirations of Roosevelt or Wallace. Willkie dislikes small conceptions of old sovereign States, and has in mind big international schemes to get rid of economic handicaps of nationalism and to provide in the Pacific schemes of mutual guarantees, by which Indians and Chinese and Filipinos and peoples of East Indies shall be assured both of political independence and of economic improvement. These ideas are still vague. They may take a more definite shape. Willkie, in criticising Churchill's Empire speech, represents an almost unanimous American feeling. Some criticism comes from disguised American imperialists who are usually genuine, if often ill-informed. I cannot judge, nor can anyone else what will come of all this talk, but all parties are finding it necessary to appeal to idealism and aspirations, in phrases that once sounded socialistic. To the common people in this melting pot of ideas the pronouncements of rival leaders may prove in practice less contradictory than now appears. After the last war American business poured out money on capital investment in Europe and lost it. This time the capitalist, if clever, would allow capital development to be done on lease-lend principles, and on a foundation of American money and goodwill create overseas markets that, as individual capitalists, they cannot fail to desire. This would be sensible on the part of big business. More likely it will regard Henry Wallace as its arch-enemy and go straight imperialist.

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HE CASE OF ADMIRAL DARLAN

HE victory that set the bells ringing last Sunday s raised in some of our minds questions that y soon be urgent about the political strategy the United Nations. A year hence, if their ns prosper, changes may have begun to appear eady in the map of Europe. There are untries which will present no problem. A althy democracy like Norway, with its happily mogeneous social structure and its near proach to equality, will resume its old life pretty uch as it was before the interruption of the rbarian invasion. It will honour its many roes, deal with its few traitors, and that is all. t such cases will be few. The greater part of rope cannot return to the way of life out of hich this war arose. Poland will not be governed the Government of "the Colonels," nor the aller states by little Dictators. Greece will cover the democracy which General Metaxas d her king destroyed. And what of Italy and ance?

That question has suddenly become actual since dmiral Darlan staged at Algiers the comic opera his assumption of power. Competent as eneral Eisenhower's military operations have en, we cannot congratulate him on his litical arrangements and appointments. It uld be difficult to imagine any choice more screditable to the cause of the United Nations an that of this contemptible opportunist as the ad of the first government they have set up on erated soil. Yielding to superior force, the miral promptly changed sides and deserted the xis which he had served for two years. The st use to have made of this prisoner would have en to exchange him for M. Herriot. Instead that, we have chosen as the ruler of all North frica the man who after Marshal Pétain, but ithout the excuse of senility, bears the chief sponsibility for France's desertion of her allies, e policy of collaboration with Germany, the struction of the Republic, and the subsequent unge into Fascism. There followed the farce, discreditable to us as it must be humiliating r Frenchmen, in which Darlan professed to gin his reign as the viceroy of the old Marshal, ho instantly repudiated him and outlawed eneral Giraud. The repudiation was, doubtless, ctated by Pétain's German masters. The fact mains, none the less, that the United Nations ve chosen to perpetuate the Vichy régime, not erely in colonial Morocco, but in Algeria, which politically an integral part of metropolitan rance. Mr. Roosevelt has assured us that the rangement is temporory and that it was dictated y military considerations. He will "ask" for e cancellation of decrees dictated by Nazi eology and the release of prisoners. If that eans the instant scrapping of the laws that ush the Jews and the release both of the ree French prisoners, said to number 10,000 en and women, and also of the 15,000 Spanish epublicans, some of them working under utal conditions on the Trans-Saharan railway, e shall feel some degree of relief. But even en the entire bureaucratic machine would still main in Fascist hands. We wish we could be re that this patronage of Fascism was merely e blunder of a soldier who may know nothing European politics, but it recalls unpleasantly the putation which the State Department has won r itself among American liberals as the partisan Vichy and General Franco. The dualism that revails in Washington has long been notorious. o trace of the spirit of the New Deal ever nges the doings of this reactionary department.

The reader may shrug his shoulders and reply at the ill effects of this unhappy choice will at y rate be confined to Africa. We wish that that ere so. It will be read by every Frenchman hether under the enemy's heel or with our rmies as a deliberate affront to General de Gaulle nd the Fighting French. What is even worse, it ill be read by the propertied and reactionary inority in France which collaborates with the enemy as a clue to the policy of the United Nations in much larger matters. Moreover, in Africa Admiral Darlan is in supreme command of a big army, highly trained and much more numerous than the forces under General de Gaulle. Will it be kept idle in Africa? The day may come when the chance to use it in Southern France will arrive. Though its officers incline to Fascism and reaction, they might perhaps consent to fight the Germans on French soil. But they would do so on the understanding that they would afterwards control France—in short, that Darlan would be installed at Vichy or even at Paris by the United Nations. That might well be, if we guess the mood of France correctly, the perfect formula for civil war.

It may be said that sooner or later a general election will be held in France. No doubt it will. But of what use will that be if a completely Fascist machine has meanwhile crushed the working class and the opposition? It was Darlan, not the Germans, who imprisoned and tried Léon Blum. Worse than all this, he would be the dispenser of the raw materials and foodstuffs which the United Nations have promised to supply. In short, it would lie with him to give work or withhold it. The authority which can do this has the power to determine the future of France. The reality in this French situation is not merely that after the German victories in 1940 part of the French Higher Command and part of the French political world lacked the virility to fight on. The reality was and is an acute class conflict which caused this corrupt upper crust to prefer collaboration with the Fascist Axis to reliance on the arms of the French masses. To-day it foresees the probability of a victory of the United Nations, and it hastens to transfer its allegiance, reckoning that if it does so betimes, it will still be able to fend off a democratic renaissance in France. The Fighting French, on the other hand, represent the brave men of the underground movement who never bent before the enemy and never sullied the great traditions of the Revolution.

It may be thought that we are taking this scandalous incident too heavily; the Foreign Office is not involved in it; some way of undoing or at least of limiting its mischief will be sought and may perhaps be found. We would gladly take this cheerful view, though we do not see any obvious way of escape, since even General Giraud, doubtless an honester patriot than Admiral Darlan, is pledged against any collaboration with the Fighting French. But even if a solution of sorts is found in this case, it will recur in one form or another wherever our armies are advancing. The Admiral is not the only opportunist who will try to make Europe safe for reaction by deserting the Axis when fortune has ceased to smile on it. Such persons will tumble over each other for recognition in Italy as soon as they deem it safe to do so—great industrialists and financiers like Count Volpi, soldiers in retirement like Marshal Badoglio and other sunshine Fascists, including the clerical wing. We shall then be told that they were always "moderates," who never liked the German alliance. It will be said that the internal politics of Italy are no concern of ours; all that does concern us is to secure order, while Mussolini and the pro-Germans are eliminated. We might argue that such solutions will not work. What has been defeated and discredited for ever is not merely Mussolini, "one man" as Mr. Churchill put it, but the whole Fascist idea. Its central purpose through twenty years has been to develop in Italians an imperialist megalomania, a belief in force and a contempt for every ideal of international collaboration. It was this Fascist idea, this shoddy scheme of values that crashed in Africa, and not merely the German alliance. It will not rise again from the sands of Libya, not even if authentically moderate rats should volunteer to save it and transfer to our camp its bedraggled standards. But we prefer to argue that any composition with such persons will render the Atlantic Charter meaningless. Under no form of Fascism, however ready it may be to take shelter under the wings of Washington and London, and least of all under the clerical variety, can the most fundamental of the Four Freedoms be realised. Whether the clericalist solution still has its partisans in Washington or Downing Street we do not know. We thought the announcement by Lord Halifax and Sir Samuel Hoare that the United Nations are fighting for "Christianity" unfortunate, for two reasons. First, the Russians, Chinese and Indians are not Christians. Secondly, this word has acquired in Southern and Central Europe a technical meaning. It suggests the system of the "Christian Gentleman" of Madrid, or the much less brutal system of Dr. Dollfuss and Dr. Schuschnigg, who destroyed democracy in Austria before Hitler annexed it. It does not reassure us when we discover that General Franco, who seems to be sliding back from non-belligerency to neutrality though he still has a division on the Russian Front, has been promised economic support by Washington after the war. Always this theme of the doling out of our supplies recurs. If we entrust them to the propertied reaction, whether it calls itself Christian, clerical, moderate or Neo-Fascist, we shall have forbidden the workers of Europe to hope and reduced the war to the rank of an imperialist squabble. More than ever, in the light of this Darlan episode, is it imperative that the United Nations create without delay a single authority over their political no less than their military strategy.

MONOPOLISTS PROPOSE

"It is a necessary condition of efficiency that the system of private enterprise should continue." So say, dogmatically, the hundred and twenty leading industrialists who, last week, offered to the public their views on the organisation of our economic system after the war. The system is to be private enterprise with a difference, no doubt; but the essential power is to rest, where it rests to-day, with the signatories and others like them, the representatives of huge aggregates of privately owned capital, which they are to continue to administer under the stimulus of the profit motive, checked by a final responsibility to the State, but free, within that limit, to determine economic policy according to their own light and leading.

Given this power, the signatories, who have a way of describing themselves impersonally as "industry," hold out the promise that they will behave with a full sense of the duties implicit in their claims. They will accept a "code of duty towards employees," as "a first charge on industry to the extent to which its provisions are matters for industry and not for the Government to carry out." They will seek to foster close collaboration between Trade Unionism and management—it is not, by the way, quite clear whether "management" in this context is to be regarded as identical with or distinct from the "industry" which the signatories represent. With this desire for collaboration goes a desire to see "the authority of the trade unions strengthened within their own ranks": that is, a more disciplined working-class accepting greater obligations to "industry" in return for "industry's" recognition of its rights. The code thus endorsed is to include a basic minimum living wage, with family allowances, extension of payment by results, opportunity for all who rise to any higher position of which they are capable, short-period unemployment pay as a right, sickness and disablement benefits, supplementary works pension schemes, holidays with pay, and reasonable hours of labour. It is further laid down that the public authorities must stand ready with schemes of work to combat unemployment during depression, with the proviso that such public works shall not be of a kind to compete with private industry, which will

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This is all very pretty; but to what does it amount, beyond what everyone takes for granted as the minimum basis for social security in the post-war world? There is little more in it, when it is studied carefully, than most workers have already, and very much less than everyone expects Sir William Beveridge to propose in his forthcoming report. Family allowances, to be sure, are new, and so is the acceptance, which appears in another section of the manifesto, of a school-leaving age of sixteen—the most really progressive proposition which the document contains. The rest of the concessions offered to labour melt away when they are closely studied. Unemployment pay is promised as a right only for short periods, and subject to an obligation to accept alternative employment. Sickness pay is to be under National Health Insurance and at a level which will "free the recipient from want"—a not very explicit provision. The promised minimum wage is linked to the acceptance by results, and, when practicable, profit-sharing. Much in this has an air of conceding gracefully what "industry" knows must be conceded in any case, and at the same time asking for a *quid pro quo*. There is in it not the smallest concession to the workers of any partnership in the "control of industry"; for we are quite unable to regard the acceptance of works councils at one end of the scale or of consultation with the Trades Union Congress at the other as involving any concession of this kind.

We have, however, so far been leaving out what is the essential point of the manifesto. This is really a proposal to organise industry in a series of closely knit trade and industrial associations, national and local, and to create on this basis a central council of industry to be "the channel through which the views of industry on economic, financial and social problems and on world trade generally can be communicated to the Government," and the means of recommending to the Government changes in existing and social legislation. The signatories go on to say that they leave it an open question whether membership of the proposed associations should be made compulsory, and whether they should be armed with statutory powers; but they hint fairly strongly that, subject to the admitted need for safeguards, they have the possibility of compulsory power very much in mind.

At this point the signatories, most of whom represent great firms or combines, seem to have bethought themselves with a start that they might appear to be disregarding the claims of the smaller employers. They accordingly propose that some sort of tribunal of appeal should be set up to safeguard the interests of the small firms; but they leave it entirely vague how this safeguard would work out in practice.

What we have in effect in this influentially signed manifesto is a plea for the strengthening and fuller public recognition of industrial monopoly, on a promise by the monopolists not to abuse their power. To concede this would be merely to continue after the war along the road which the state has been treading ever since the last war, and is actually treading to-day. The entire record of the past generation in the field of industry is one not merely of growing monopoly power, but of increasing toleration and positive encouragement of monopoly by the State. In considering whether to travel farther along this road, we cannot possibly leave out of account the uses to which the monopoly powers conceded up to the present have been put. They have plainly been used, in the great majority of cases, not to extend production in the consumers' interests, but to damp it down. It is probably correct to say that, on the whole, the monopolists have given better labour conditions than the more competitive industries, except those which have been growing exceptionally fast. But this is only to say that they have been wise enough to buy off their employees with some share of their monopoly profits. Nor can it be doubted that what some workers have gained in this way other workers and the consumers generally have lost in unemployment and underproduction of needed goods.

We can see no guarantee of any kind that, if the signatories to this manifesto are given the authority they ask for, their policy will be any different from what it has been hitherto. Fine words butter no parsnips; and what is left when the fine words are discounted is a proposal to entrench monopoly firmly in all industries and then leave it to make its own terms with labour and with such smaller employers as manage to survive, subject only to the vaguest provisions for appeal against the abuse of its enormous powers. The prospect does not attract us; and we doubt if it will attract anyone, except a monopolist, who looks beneath the surface of its plausible phrasing to what it really means.

And yet—what is the alternative? These big industrialists are only stating what is pretty certain to happen if we set about reconstructing industry on a basis of private capitalism. The idea that monopoly, when it comes to suit the big business men and when the technical conditions favour huge-scale output, can be kept in check by tribunals of appeal or by any sort of regulation of its practices, has surely been exploded long ago by the experience of every country which has attempted the task, from the United States to the Weimar Republic. There is, for the consumers, only one way of escape from the rule of monopoly in those industries and services which have reached the monopolistic stage; and that is the way of public acquisition. This does not imply any need to take over the smaller firms, even in industries in which the major concerns are due for conversion into public corporations. Indeed, it may amount rather to the establishment of a new framework within which the smaller businesses will have a better chance of not being swallowed up. What it does imply is that the only adequate safeguard against the abuse of monopoly power is disinterested management working under direct public responsibility, as a substitute for interested control by the representatives of massed private capital.

Whether the trade unions will see in this manifesto—what they are clearly meant to see in it—a bait to be swallowed, we cannot tell. Some of their leaders will undoubtedly be attracted by the prospect of a stronger control over their own members, such as the countenance of the employers' combines and associations can undoubtedly give them. Some may even be attracted by the idea of a council of industry, in which they can hope to play a very junior part, for advising the Government about social and industrial legislation. But we fancy most trade unionists will realise that their fundamental interest as both producers and consumers lies in plenty, and by no means in restrictive monopoly, and that most, if not all, of the concessions embodied in the proposed "code of duty" towards employees are in effect things which they can get anyhow, by political means, without entering into any sort of partnership with capitalist monopoly.

"Great changes," say the industrialists, "will have to be made in industry, as elsewhere." But these changes, "must be evolutionary and practical rather than revolutionary and abstract." In what sense "evolutionary" is here bracketed with "practical" and "revolutionary" with "abstract" we are not quite sure. The changes in Russia since 1917 have been revolutionary; but we have not noticed that they have been abstract or unpractical. Indeed, very much the reverse. To say this is not to propose that we should proceed in all respects to follow the example of the Soviet Union—for our circumstances are very different. But still less do we wish to follow out the course of practical evolution of business monopoly which this country has steadily pursued since the last war. Yet that, with merely the abstract and unpractical promise that it will somehow turn out quite different in future, is pretty nearly what these hundred and twenty leading lights of big business propose.

A COLONIAL CHARTER

MONTHS ago, in this country, a demand arose a Colonial Charter, a supplement to the Atlan Charter, which would define the place of Colonial peoples in the post-war world. T demand is now being voiced in America as w by influential committees, responsible statesm and not-so-responsible journalists. For, say wh one will about the Atlantic Charter, it stands a certain vision of the future in the eyes of dependent peoples. It is the one declaration war aims which the United Nations have so allowed themselves. It has been solemnly pr claimed by Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill, a adhered to by the Soviet Union.

More is the pity, then, that its history as regar the dependent peoples is not entirely creditab A few days after the Charter was formulate Mr. Attlee told an audience of Africans in th country that the principles of the Charter appli "to all peoples of the world." Three weeks la Mr. Churchill contradicted this in the House Commons. He claimed that the depende peoples represented a separate problem, regardi which we had already made declarations "whi are complete in themselves, free from ambiguity. Mr. Roosevelt, it is true, lent support to Mr. A lee's interpretation of the position, but the Briti Government has not moved from Mr. Churchill original stand. No one seems to know what a the complete, unambiguous statements to whic Mr. Churchill referred. Time and again, in the last months, the Government has been press to issue a White Paper containing these sta ments. Up till now no White Paper has appeare All this has made a very bad impression in Ind and other "colonial" territories. In Americ too, it has been noticed. The New York corre pondent of the *Manchester Guardian* write "There is a strong impression here th Mr. Churchill is much less interested in such declaration than is President Roosevelt." H adds: "The Atlantic Charter never made mu impression on Americans, partly because M Churchill's reservation left some doubt as to wh area it was intended to cover."

But although the clear simple statement which many have been urging has not been made, would be doing less than justice to this country a to the United States to deny that, both in offic and unofficial quarters, there has been a gropi towards a new conception of the status of coloni in the post-war world. Government spokesm and *Times* editorials have rung the death-kn of the old principle of "trusteeship" with th colonies as our "wards." In its place they ha put the new ideal of "partnership," senior a junior partners in empire. Alternatively, the is talk of "common citizenship in empire. These phrases are put out in the fashion of tr balloons, and they have not yet aroused any tran ports of enthusiasm among Colonial peoples, w remain suspicious. But they are indicative of certain uneasiness in official quarters (partic larly since the fall of Malaya and all the criticis that went with it). They are a recognition th the old conception of Colonial status has outliv its day. This recognition has echoed and echoed across the Atlantic in a whole series official speeches. They have been noble speech but have not yet resulted in the awaited declarati

In the meantime unofficial circles in Brit and the U.S. are struggling with the proble An American group has just published a rep "The Atlantic Charter and Africa from American viewpoint," with an excellent chro logy "Events in African History." These pu cations are significant, not only for the views th stress, but because they represent much ear thought and study on African problems. T report urges that prompt steps be taken to Colonial peoples a larger share in governm with self-government as the goal. It asks that eight points of the Atlantic Charter should all applied to Africa; that in every colony, p tions in the Civil Service should be thrown o to Africans; and it puts forward a number u.

onomic proposals which are not new, but are rtainly acceptable to progressive thought in ritain. They bear, in fact, a marked resemblance the imperial programme of the British Labour rty. The report also calls on the United ates to devote more attention and more financial d to Africa, and to consider establishing a parate division in the State Department to al with African-American affairs. There is ready a Caribbean Department in Washington, d much American activity in the West Indies, that the "mixing-up" process between merica and ourselves is extending to the Colonial ld as well. This American interest is very elcome, but there are also clear enough dangers it, if America is to be the America of Wall reet. The U.S. record is far from perfect in ese matters, and some of the reports reaching of American doings in the West Indies do not ay our qualms. That is why it is all the more portant to declare our aims *now*.

What are these aims? In Britain there is uch hard thinking, inside the Labour movement d out, on this subject. There are some points which most progressive thought is now agreed. e are agreed that there shall be an end to colonial" status, and that there shall be rapid vance to "self-government" in the colonies. e are agreed that Colonial peoples shall advance the highest posts in every walk of life, and that ere shall be an abolition of the colour bar in y form. We are agreed that there shall be a eat extension of social services; that the alth of the colonies shall be reserved for the olonial peoples; that land shall be held more uitably; that European immigrant com- unities shall no longer enjoy special privileges. t a complete vision of the future of Colonial oples is not so simple as the mere "ending of perialism throughout the world" for which merican journalists ask. It rests on two funda- ental, rather intricate ideas, which cannot be pressed in such easy terms. What, in the future, to be the relationship between strong and weak tions? It is no answer at all merely to say that bject nations shall be "free." The Balkan ates, the small South American republics, iberia, Abyssinia, have all tasted the joys of freedom" and technical self-government. But practice they have been subdued by the con- ant threat of overwhelmingly superior military rce and reduced to economic dependence on ore powerful neighbours. It is no more con- ructive to tell a weak people that it is "free" d leave it to its own devices than it is to leave e aged and sick to starve in "freedom" in the tter. The rich and strong have a social sponsibility to the weak—whether in the mmunity of persons, or the community of tions. It is by the definition of this responsi- lity that the Colonial Charter for the future ust stand or fall.

This idea of the responsibility of the strong tions is gaining ground, but there is a second fund- mental idea, the growth of responsibility on the rt of the Colonial peoples themselves. Much of r thinking is muddled in this regard. There is call for "self-government" on the one hand; the other there is a demand for the grant of pital, social services, help of every sort, for the ckward peoples. We must look for the syn- esis between these two conflicting claims, be- use there *is* a conflict between political adult- od and economic spoon-feeding. Perhaps the nthesis lies in the recognition of a dual respon- bility—the responsibility of the strong to give sitive aid to the weak without involving political mination; and the responsibility of the weak accept this aid and use it constructively in the terest of themselves and of a broader humanity.

Relationships between strong and weak are ver easy. To-day the strong are hesitant, a ade patronising; the weak are suspicious and uerulous. If there is to be enthusiastic collabora- on in the war, some psychological adjustment is early needed. That would be the function of the olonial Charter for which a host of people—on th sides of the Atlantic, let it be stressed—are w calling.

Rita Hinden

A LONDON DIARY

We have had a glimpse of vistas this week which have a hint, at least, of the vision splendid. It is exhilarating, at long last, to see Allied plans superbly conceived and flawlessly executed. I do not wonder that Mr. Churchill was able, in his speech on the Address, to make about the best analysis since he became Prime Minister of the strategic issues involved in the pattern of war. It was a great utterance in his very best style; and the asides which he extemporised made it obvious that he was in that humour which real confidence in the outcome begets. At long last power and speed in initiative and attack have operated proportionately to the occasion.

* * *

A friend tells me that at the Lord Mayor's luncheon at the Mansion House last week one incident which went unreported in the press deserves record. After the Prime Minister's grand speech the retiring Lord Mayor, Sir John Laurie, was responding to the toast of the Lord Mayor and the Court of Aldermen proposed by the Archbishop of Canterbury. After recalling that it had been customary for some time for the Primate to propose this toast, and saying how glad he was that the present holder of the dignity was maintaining this tradition, he continued in some such words as these: "I can assure him of the friendly co-operation of the Court of Aldermen and of the City of London as a whole, in all his lawful undertakings." The speaker paused, and, as the implications were taken, the isolated titters of the quick-witted rose to a tempest of laughter. The laughter was not wholly good-humoured; the City is distinctly resentful of the Archbishop's incursions into politics and economics. When the Archbishop rose to make his speech one of my neighbours at the table muttered "What's he going to do? Propose the health of the Stock Exchange, I suppose."

* * *

I went last Thursday night to a memorial meeting in Cambridge to Ram Nahum, the brilliant young Cambridge physicist who was killed there in an air raid this summer. Sir Laurence Bragg, Dr. Carr-Saunders, and Mr. Harry Pollitt spoke movingly of his work on behalf of the older generation. But what impressed me even more were the speeches of his younger contemporaries. Their testimony to his powers of leadership, of the influence that he exerted on students all over Britain, made one feel that a chance bomb had deprived us of one who would certainly have made a distinguished name. And the audience was remarkable—the young people of all the United Nations. I do not think anyone could have watched their faces and had a moment's patience with those who accuse the younger generation of cynicism. These were young people with a faith paying tribute to one of themselves who symbolised to them the passion to make a world more worthy of what human personality can be. Ram Nahum was one of those younger scientists who know that the true purpose of knowledge is to make man the master of his destiny. The students propose to send an X-ray unit to Russia in his memory. I think he would have liked that tribute beyond any other.

* * *

I wish I understood how the different departments put their special knowledge at the service of other departments which could use them. A friend of mine has just returned after a year's service in Libya, where his job was the examination of German prisoners. He is a specialist in German history, with an intimate knowledge of the country which goes back over many years. In the course of his Libyan experience several hundred Nazis have passed through his hands, so that he has a pretty detailed knowledge of the effect of propaganda at any rate upon the German army in Africa. In the weeks since he returned he has been assigned to other duties. No one in the War Office sought to explore the meaning of his experience. No one suggested that he ought to be put in touch with the appropriate section of the Ministry of Information, of the B.B.C., or of the Foreign Office. Are there no arrangements in operation by which this kind of contact is automatically made? And, if there are not, is it not time that the authorities realised that they can still learn something about the propaganda job?

* * *

The problem of the quality of the elected representative in a political democracy is not confined to this country, though it is serious enough here. A distinguished American historian writes to me that he has been a good deal to Washington this year. "Every time I am impressed with the fact that the inhabitants of Sank Center and Squirrel Hollow see the urgency of the situation far more clearly than their duly elected representatives. . . . The small-towners are wondering when Congress will realise that there is a war going on. This may be encouraging from the standpoint of our confidence in democracy, but maybe we need some new machinery for electing representatives. In my own district in November I will be confronted with voting either for a Republican who was one of those who refused to fortify Guam, or a Democrat who is a rabble-rouser and is and always has been simply on the make for himself. I have had to make speeches at Labour Temples with the latter, and am appalled at having to vote for him." It was Lord Halifax—I mean the great Lord Halifax—who wrote nearly two and a half centuries ago that "the best kind of party is in some sort a conspiracy against the nation."

* * *

I noted with interest in the *Times* on Saturday a letter from a correspondent criticising the indifference of the Civil Service to the problems of personnel and management. I do not myself think that this is true of a considerable number of the staff associations which represent the middle and the lower grades of the service; on the contrary, I think many of them give close and eager attention to these issues, and some of their officials could, in my judgment, stand up to any experts in the business field in this realm. No small part of the weakness of the Civil Service in this field is inherent in its very nature as the expression of what business men themselves want the Civil Service to be. For, after all, it is the business men who have fought at every step the effort to make the State positive, instead of negative, and the whole atmosphere of its activities is still permeated by the conception of the gentleman, the amateur rather than the professional. One cannot have it both ways. You cannot have an economic life which protests against every extension of Government control and develop a Civil Service specialised to the habits of controlling economic life. I wish I could be sure that the main purpose of some of the critics of the Service was to see it reorganised to fulfil the functions our social order requires. In fact I suspect that a good deal of it comes from interests which hope, as soon as the war ends, to use these deficiencies in the Service as the basis upon which to demand the rapid termination of the wartime controls.

* * *

But the training of men and women for administration is a matter which goes far beyond the Civil Service. If the trade unions are to play their full part in the post-war world they have got to think out ways and means of training their younger members in that art. It is still true of most trade unions that they assume that the qualities a good administrator requires are added by the experience a workman gains at his job. There are, no doubt, some superb administrators among the trade unions; and some, Mr. Harold Clay, of the Transport Workers, for instance, whose knowledge of that side of the industry with which he is concerned is hardly surpassed on the employees' side. But, by and large, the trade unions have not yet begun to think out the proper training of experts for their service nor the proper use of the outside expert. It is rare to see a trade union head office equipped with the necessary specialists for the job they have to perform. The statistician, the engineer, the industrial psychologist, the medical specialist, have all still to find their proper place in the structure of trade unionism. It ought to be as natural for the Miners' Federation to organise its own expert inquiries into the causes and cure, for instance, of miners' nystagmus as it is for them to watch the pay roll. And I doubt whether any British trade union has the really remarkable knowledge of every side of the industry it touches as the Amalgamated Garment Workers of America has come to possess under Mr. Sidney Hillman's remarkable leadership. A new social order in Britain will require a new trade unionism. I hope Sir Walter Citrine is persuading the General Council to realise this.

* * *

I wonder why it is that most British diplomats who write their memoirs seem to specialise in the trivial reminiscence. Most people noted the startling contrast between the Diary of Mr. Joseph E. Davies and Sir Nevile Henderson's *Failure of a Mission*. I read the other day the autobiography of Sir John Tilley, who has been our Ambassador to Brazil and Japan, and had long years in Downing Street. Either he is one of the most discreet mortals who ever graced diplomacy or he imagines that the world is interested in a mass of utterly insignificant incidents which may be a pleasant recollection in Sir John's memory, but have no meaning for the ordinary reader. Why the latter should be asked to pay 18*s*. to read that Sir John Norton Griffiths gave a dinner at which Lord Swinton proposed Sir John Tilley's health I cannot imagine. I think Mr. Eden ought to read *London to Tokyo* (Hutchinson) and ask himself if it is not one of the objects of a good system of appointment to get officials into the Foreign Office who, in a period of paper shortage, do not want to write the kind of thing Sir John Tilley's publisher thinks people ought to read.

HAROLD J. LASKI

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to D. B.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

Robin Richmond, the organist at the Paramount Theatre (you may have heard him on the B.B.C.), is doing a grand job of instilling a little healthy hatred of the Boche into the lethargic British soul.

His method is to write new words to old songs. For instance, to the tune of " Alexander's Ragtime Band " he starts off :

> " Come on and cheer, come on and cheer
> Alexander's tough-guy band."

I do not know whether he realises it, but what Mr. Richmond is really doing is to revive the art of the troubadour.—*Sunday Dispatch.*

One cannot help commenting that the action of " such a man is not English," said the West Middlesex Coroner (Mr. H. G. Broadbridge) at an inquest held at Feltham on Monday, when referring to a cyclist whose conduct on the road was stated to have caused an accident which resulted in a man's death.—*Surrey Comet.*

A woman subscriber writes : " While in Bradford yesterday I saw a hat in a window marked £15.2.6. Is that not absurd ? What about it ? "

To begin with, I would say I'm by nature more opposed to low prices than high prices.

The merchant who offered that hat should not be called a profiteer. He had only his normal percentage of profit. He had to add in the Purchase Tax. The hat was probably worth the price. Quite a few women in Bradford can afford to buy £15 hats.—*The Efficiency Magazine.*

NOW WE ARE SEVEN

To the tune of " Now I am the ruler of the Queen's Navee "

" The foundations necessary to ensure a better order in this country and throughout the Empire can be laid by this Parliament. If they are faithful to this task they will not only be known as the Victory Parliament, but as the Great Parliament . . . the greatest England has ever known."—A. G. Walkden, M.P., House of Commons. Reply to King's Speech, November 11th.

When we were one, we were Left or Right,
And the House was sometimes ruffled by a Party fight ;
We thought Geneva sanctions could be put in force,
While the Government proceeded on a different course ;
But the Government was certain of a victory
By a very large Conservative majority.

When we were two, we were split on Spain,
But we cheered the end of sanctions under Chamberlain,
At three we entered on a crisis year
When Europe's Minor States began to disappear,
But we voted for appeasers and their policy
By a very large Conservative majority.

We toasted Musso's Empire when we were four,
And we followed the appeasers when they rushed to war ;
At five, we entered on a Party truce
Which Conservatives are finding of the greatest use,
As the Government is certain of a victory
By a Labour and Conservative majority.

At six we decided that a Commons storm
Directed at the Government was not good form,
And now at seven we are quite content
To be England's longest Coalition Parliament,
So we all pull together and never disagree
As a Labour and Conservative majority.

By not returning to the Party line
We'll still be in our infancy at eight or nine,
The years will come and the years will go
While we vote for revolution and the status quo,
For we follow our instructions so carefully
That we will be the Parliament of victory.

SAGITTARIUS

UNPROMISED ISLAND

On the British island of Mauritius, 500 miles east of Madagascar, 1,580 Jewish refugees from Nazi Europe who tried to enter Palestine as illegal immigrants are detained by the Colonial authorities. Denied the promised Zion, and unwanted on any other part of the earth's surface, internment in this remote and tropical island has meant a new life for every one of them. They have found not only sanctuary, but useful employment, a decent standard of living, and—what they appreciate most of all—kindness from a generous and hospitable community.

Mauritius originally took charge of these refugees at the request of the British Government in London, and received them during Christmas of 1940. A camp had been hurriedly but properly prepared, with amenities including stone buildings and wooden huts fitted with cubicles, kitchens, bathrooms, workshops and a hospital. The Governor of the island (then Sir Bede Clifford) decreed that the treatment of the internees should be friendly and sympathetic. The decree was unnecessary : the island of Mauritius is not the Isle of Man, and the people of the colony accepted the internees as guests from the very beginning. The Governor set up an official committee to administer his policy, and, on public request, added an unofficial " watch committee " to maintain contact between the people and the internees and to investigate personal grievances.

The first setback to these excellent plans was disease. For no sooner had the internees been settled than an epidemic of typhus broke out in

the camp. The internees had brought the ge with them, and the epidemic lasted for t months. Immediately after it had been checke there was an outbreak of malaria. This seco epidemic taxed the medical resources of the enti colony, including the ladies of the V.A.D., wh turned out to assist with the nursing. The ro of the trouble was found to be in the breedi grounds of flies and mosquitoes in the bu around the camp. The fit men promptly s about clearing the bush, and after they h finished the epidemic soon came to an en On the 56 acres of land which had been clear vegetables were sown. Within six months th camp was growing all it needed for its ow kitchen. This season's crop has been more th abundant.

For over a year now there has been ve little illness of any kind in the camp. There much to keep the internees busy. They do all th work connected with the maintenance of th camp : cooking, bread-baking, making beddin clothing and furniture. Local craftsmen h trained them in certain trades and handicraf and in return internees have given their expe knowledge to help the development of loc industries. To an island cut off from much th was imported before the war, new industries suc as soap and hardware manufacture are of gre value.

Mauritius is about the size of Surrey. In population of half a million, the European eleme is relatively much larger than in any oth tropical colony. The white settlers are largely French origin, and they have an uncomm tradition of intellectual culture derived from th French *noblesse*, who emigrated to the island the eighteenth century. A community whe cultural values are prized was not slow recognise in the presence of many gifted a intellectual Jewish internees a potential ass to itself. Consequently, internee artists a scholars were invited to give lessons in musi art and languages to the general public, and conduct more highly specialised tutorial cours for teachers. Several of the more distinguish scholars go from the camp regularly to lectu at the higher educational institutes. The audiences include not only the European co munity, but numbers of the (preponderant Indian) coloured population as well. A cam orchestra has been formed, and occasionally c operates with local amateurs in performances opera.

Schools for the children of internees a personally cared for by the colony's Director Education, and a large library has grown around a gift of 800 books originally present to the camp by the Mauritius police from th own library. As well as the facilities for gam and recreation which are inevitably found und the Union Jack, weekly outings are arranged f parties of adults and children to go to the seasid

There is a camp fund to assist destitu internees, and since more than 1,500 out of 1,5 are without any resources, there have been a gre many demands upon it. Supplemented contributions from Jewish organisations in Sou Africa, the fund has distributed well over 10,0 rupees' worth of goods. Internees who are ab to earn money in the island contribute half of to this fund.

Many nationalities are represented in the cam including 640 Austrians, 294 Czechs, 172 Pol 151 Danzigers, 84 Germans and 192 State persons. Among 1,580 internees, four Christian by religion ; the others are Jews.

The experience of Mauritius suggests that th is at least a temporary solution to the probl of illegal immigration into Palestine. Good is certainly not lacking among the people of t colony, and there seems no reason to suppose th it would not be found elsewhere. Two steam chock-a-block with Jewish refugees den entrance to Palestine, have gone to the botto of the sea this year. Conceivably it is not feasi for an over-crowded Palestine to accept m Jewish immigrants at this time. Yet how mu better for the British authorities to intern th helpless outcasts in some hospitable corner of the Empire instead of turning them back to sea without hope of landing anywhere. Another Mauritius may be the practical alternative to another "Struma."

MAURICE CRANSTON

IN AND OUT OF BED

I WAS lately a patient in a nursing home in which every bedroom was called by the name of a saint and had a saint's name painted on the door. As a result of this the nurses commonly refer to a patient, not by his own name, but as "Saint Francis" or "Saint Theresa," or whatever may be the name of the room he occupies. Thus one morning, when I had left my morning tea to get cold, I heard my nurse calling to another nurse on the landing: "Sister, when you're taking a cup of tea to Saint Paul you might bring one to Mr. Y." For some absurd reason the notion of Saint Paul and myself having morning tea more or less together raised my spirits to such a point that I at once took a turn for the better. I have never shared the modern prejudice against Saint Paul—a prejudice for which, I imagine, Matthew Arnold is largely responsible in this country. I certainly felt happier taking a cup of tea with him than I should have felt taking a cup of tea with Saint Augustine. I myself, I may say, was known in the nursing home for purposes of reference as Saint Mary. Myself I was a heretic in those severely Franciscan surroundings. When first I was taken out of the ambulance stretcher and deposited in bed and a nun, coming in to fill in a kind of census form about my age and other peculiarities, had reached the question "Religion?" I answered diffidently: "My father was a Presbyterian." I did not wish to disown the creed of my forebears, but at the same time there are several points in regard to which I cannot go quite so far as Calvin and John Knox, and I could not say plain "Presbyterian" without suggesting that I was slightly more orthodox than I am in regard to predestination, for example, or in regard to the Pope's being anti-Christ. It would have been impolite to flaunt such an opinion as the last in the home of ministering angels professing a different creed. Besides, I have knelt to the Pope and kissed his finger-ring in the Vatican, and was none the worse for it. John Knox would scarcely have done this, or regarded as a faithful Presbyterian a follower who did it.

For the time, however, I was not much concerned with theological niceties. Sitting propped up on a rubber air-ring, with fourteen pillows at my back and a pillow called a "donkey" under my knees, I was content to think about nothing at all except what time of day it might be. In consequence of the early hour at which one begins the day in a nursing home, I often got the impression that it was late afternoon when it was not yet eleven o'clock in the morning, and so much was I out of my reckoning about the hours that, after a doze one day, I found myself asking a nurse in perfect seriousness: "Is it to-day or yesterday?" Not that the time passed slowly. To lie with one's mind a perfect blank is not necessarily to be bored. Even when I was too tired to read, I had only to close my eyes to see a page of print before me—it usually looked like a piece of an unknown work by Dickens—and, though I could not read it, I was greatly interested in trying to read it. Then, as the page came to an end, I would open my eyes to see it more clearly, expecting to find it in front of me, and was surprised to find nothing visible within reach except the pink blanket. Crossword puzzles also formed themselves before my eyeballs when the lids were closed—puzzles with difficult nonsensical clues like "Seahorse in Kirkcudbright"—and I spent a good deal of time trying to solve these till my opened eyes told me that they were not there. Apart from this the ministrations of nurses and doctors leave little opportunity for tedium. Was not the day punctuated by thermometer readings, draughts and medicine pellets, glasses of milk, and with my own prescription—sips of whisky as a preventive of pneumonia? Then, as temperature fell to normal, the food began to taste so delicious that I thought I had never tasted such fare since the war broke out, so that there was always a meal to look forward to. The very bread—even in peacetime it would be difficult to find bread of such celestial texture and flavour. As for the boiled egg or the orange that came with breakfast, how privileged a person one seemed to oneself at sight of them on the tray. There is something to be said just now for being a convalescent after a not too serious illness or accident. One can even with a good conscience keep a fire burning from daybreak or before it. In all things one belongs to a priority class.

Soon after comes the pleasure of recovery from helplessness. The humiliation of helplessness is at first rather overwhelming to any one to whom the life of a patient is a novelty. One is reduced to the condition of a new-born baby, even as regards washing, without the new-born baby's beautiful unconsciousness of its plight. Even though the adult human being quickly adapts himself to so unusual an environment, the first stirrings of self-help are a luxury beyond boiled eggs and oranges. To be able to wash one's hands and face is something. "Do it thoroughly," says the sister from County Louth. "Behind the ears, mind; I'll investigate." To be able unaided to right one's position in bed—to be able unassisted to get out of bed and to stand on the floor with the help of a hand on the mantelpiece—as one regains these capacities one ceases to be a new-born baby and becomes a child that has just learnt to walk and feels more independent than perhaps it will ever feel again. One of the pleasantest spectacles of life is a child at this stage, making its way carefully downstairs by holding on to the banisters and impatiently rejecting the hand of an elder who wishes to take an arm as a precaution against a tumble. In such a mood of challenging self-reliance does one make one's first journey across the bedroom floor to the window to look out at the world again—not quite so good a world as one had imagined while lying under the blankets with nothing in sight but the leaves of a plane tree tossed by the wind into curiously human and animal shapes like the clouds of one's childhood—but at least the wide world from which one had been for a brief time an exile. Next came the pleasure of being able to walk to the bathroom, to dress oneself, to sit in an armchair for hours at a time and to read poetry or rubbish or nothing — especially rubbish or nothing. As one sat there with the sun shining outside, the gas fire burning and good news coming over the wireless, the nursing home took on more and more the aspect of a holiday resort—a kind of wartime substitute for a deck chair at the point of the Palace Pier at Brighton. There was the same freedom from responsibility and a sense of duty, the same good weather reaching the mind through the body and inducing optimism in a loafer.

Still, the restoration of the power of walking was beginning to incite the blood to protest against this lotus eating inactivity. Visions of myself taking a three-mile walk day after day till I died stirred me to noble purpose. Too much of my past life, I told myself, had been spent in an armchair—that contemptible halfway house between bed and manly vigour, and now that I had reached my second childhood and realised once more how much more delightful is activity than lethargy I would convert this new pleasure into a habit and rejuvenate myself in more natural ways than by swallowing tablets from a patent medicine bottle. . . .

Now that I am at home again in an armchair I still dream of that three-mile walk but with a daily weakening will. Perhaps with the next new moon or the return of double summer time my will will have grown stronger again, and I may begin walking for walking's sake—a thing I have not done for many years if I ever did it. Or is it only in nursing homes that one cherishes such dreams, inspired by the proximity of the energetic Saint Paul with his unnatural passion for drinking tea at half-past five in the morning?

Y.Y.

DUTY RUN

(Articles about operational flying in the R.A.F. generally and understandably deal with occasions marked by the dramatic or the heroic. This article attempts to describe a routine night, when absolutely nothing eventful happened. Major censorial excisions, affecting the continuity of the article, are marked by asterisks.)

THE Dutch coast came up almost dead on E.T.A.* We had been able to deduce its whereabouts for about ten minutes before we crossed it from the tracer aimed at aircraft in front by four or five light guns on the coast. There were layers of broken cloud with tops at about seven thousand feet; the path of the tracer was only visible from the point where it emerged above the cloud. We could not see the positions of the guns, or the coast, until we were almost dead above and a break in the cloud revealed the familiar contours of Walcheren Island.

Above the cloud it was almost as bright as day. On our starboard there was a full moon sixty degrees above the horizon; to our port was the glowing semicircle of the Northern Lights. All the illumination in the air seemed to be caught and reflected upwards by the carpet of white cloud beneath us.

Flying across the North Sea we had been chattering intermittently on the intercomm.:

"This is too bloody light for my liking."

"It certainly is. You can see anything miles off."

"There's a couple of aircraft astern right now. One's a Stirling, the other looks like another Wimpey, but I couldn't be certain."

"Keep an eye on them in case they belong to the other side."

Once a Manchester came up from astern and passed over us, five hundred feet above, moving about forty miles an hour faster than we were. It was a Manchester Mark I, with triple fins on the tail-unit, and therefore now something of a rarity. It occurred simultaneously to at least three members of the crew that it might be piloted by a friend from another station who was liable to take the air in an aircraft of that type.

"My God, I wonder whether that's Prissy in A for Apple."

"You might creep up on him and see."

"It would scare hell out of him if he found himself passed by a Wimpey."

"We'll let him go on and get shot at first. We can call him up to-morrow and ask him if it was him."

A quarter of an hour later we saw the first gunfire.

"Light flak on the starboard bow, some way off."

"O.K. When's our E.T.A. at the Dutch coast up?"

"In about ten minutes."

"Keep an eye on the flak and let me know if we look like passing slap over it."

"It may be one of those bloody flakships and not the coast at all."

Ten minutes later there was a break in the cloud. We were over a wide estuary, with a long flat island a few miles away to our starboard. The tide was low, and we could see the surf where the sea met the beach. The tracer from two light guns came up about a quarter of a mile to our starboard, and the bursts from a heavy gun a little nearer.

"Coastline more or less underneath us. I think it's the north shore of Walcheren."

"It had bloody well better be."

"I suppose those silly saps down below don't imagine they're shooting at us."

"Pilot, will you alter course to 070?"

"070. O.K."

The break in the cloud ended half-way along Walcheren, and the ground was obscured. But it was no longer necessary to see earth to know that we were over enemy-occupied territory. In front, through an arc of ninety degrees, we could see the heads of about sixty searchlights blunted against the clouds; a small circle of illumination, like a phosphorus penny, moved along the top of the cloudbank as each light searched below. From about as many points light flak coiled up into the air above the cloud, and here and there one could see flashes from heavy guns. Another

---

* Estimated time of arrival.

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Stirling and two Lancasters passed over us, several thousand feet above, the Stirling weaving in enormous sweeps from side to side of our track, the Lancasters being lost to sight within a few minutes of coming in range of our vision.

Then suddenly there was another lucky break in the cloud, this time a large one. The navigator emerged from his compartment and pin-pointed us over the Maas, ten miles north-east of Breda. Through the gap in the cloud we had a bird's-eye view of the enemy's defences coming into action over an area of about four hundred square miles. In the semi-circle of country before us, clusters of searchlights reached up from about thirty localities. The clusters groped round the sky and periodically flak was fired up at the apex of the cone. This was still mostly light stuff, with tracer, but the proportion of heavy flak increased as we moved inland. Flying over Holland or Belgium has an oddness all its own. Underneath you is the country of an ally-in-arms ; in each of the quiet villages over which you pass there are men and women whose dislike of the German race is probably sharper and more bitter than your own, because kindled by the horror of daily contact. Their resistance to the aggressor is a process of personal, deliberate planning ; while your role, however much as an individual you may enjoy or dislike night-bombing, is a mere matter of obedience to orders. Warfare abounds in paradoxes, but few odder complexes of emotion can be experienced by anyone than those induced by the fact of living in a flak-defended area in Holland or Belgium—hearing the bombers of your ally pass over you on their way to objectives across the frontier, feeling your house shudder from the guns which attempt to shoot them down, and knowing that an aircraft *in extremis* may be compelled to jettison its load on the defences assaulting it from below, and that if it is shot down its bombs are going to come down with it.

Below us we could see the flarepaths of four aerodromes.

* * *

As we passed over, one of them burst into life. Tracer poured at a low elevation from some fifteen guns sited around the aerodrome perimeter and within the field. There was an explosion in the air and something crashed in flames at the far end of the flarepath.

" Looks as if an intruder had bought it down there."

" Poor sap walked right into it."

" Looked as though he pranged on the flarepath, though. They won't get many more aircraft off there to-night."

Shortly after passing Arnhem, the gap in the cloud ended. An expanse of white cumulus stretched away in front, like a vast semi-circular plateau of snow and ice, its surface flecked by the red flashes of heavy guns and yellow searchlights beating against the cloud-base.

" There's a bit of a party going on over there to the port."

" How far away ? "

" About sixty miles, I suppose."

" Emden, I should think."

" Looks like it. Is there anything laid on there to-night ? "

" I don't know, but it looks as if someone has gone there, anyhow."

" Pretty ropey navigation."

" Wait until we find our joint."

Our target was in the dock area of Bremen, still some hundred miles away. No sign of a break appeared in the cloud below. As the moon rose higher in the sky, the brightness of the night was accentuated. More bombers were now visible, proceeding methodically in the same direction as ourselves. One Wellington flying exactly at our height, about a mile to the starboard between us and the moon, kept us company for half an hour, visible whenever we turned to look at it. For the most part, though, despite the brightness of the night, one saw other aircraft only through looking at flak coming up and then recognising an aircraft somewhere in the sky above it.

* * *

The wave we belonged to was not scheduled to bomb until fifteen minutes after the first arrivals. We got there about seven minutes early.

" I think we had better stick around a bit and
what happens."

" O.K. There are some bloody great fires do
there already."

* * *

We flew around for about ten minutes, hoping
a last-minute break in the cloud. None materialis
but we were able in that period of waiting to sati
ourselves that we had come to the right place. Ap
from the party which Bremen itself was putting
our position was fixed by the outward and visib
signs of life from Oldenburg, Wilhelmshaven, Wese
munde. The cloud was not thick. The searchligh
came up through it in places, and fires and gunflash
were clearly visible below. Right down the leng
of the Weser it seemed half to break, revealing di
tinctly the line of the river.

" There's no point in waiting for this bloody clo
to break. We'd better go in."

" I suppose it would be no good going and seei
whether it's any better at Wilhelmshaven ? "

" I don't think so. You can see this damned st
stretching away right over the sea."

The aircraft was turned through ninety degrees, a
we flew in the direction of the farthest fire. The od
thing was that, while we had been prospecting th
town, we had seen no other aircraft. Now we s
them converging upon the target from half the poin
of the compass. A Hampden came sailing down th
sky above us, a Manchester flashed—too close f
comfort—across our bows, we got in the slipstream
of three or four unseen aircraft, we saw half a doz
others taking up position for their run in, and w
went in to bomb with a Lancaster and a Wellingt
on our port and another Lancaster to our starboard

We were flying at ten thousand feet. A thous
feet below streams of multi-coloured tracer, li
handfuls of Hundreds and Thousands off a birthd
cake, reached their ceiling ; they came coiling out o
the cloud, described a gentle parabola, and fell—wi
infinite leisureliness—away. They looked extr
ordinarily pretty and innocuous. The cones o
searchlights reached their apex three to eight thousan
feet above. There were about a dozen main cone
with fifteen to thirty searchlights in each. Othe
searchlights swept the sky singly or in pairs. Th
heavy flak was bursting from about our height t
eight thousand feet above. Suddenly, about fo
thousand feet above us, we saw a bright flash at th
point of intersection of a knot of searchlights. Th
flash expanded into a compact blob of flame whic
fell, with infinite slowness, through the air. At abo
our height the blob exploded, divided into two halve
and fell, apparently accelerating, through the clo
below.

" Some poor sap's bought it."

" Looked like a large aircraft."

And then we flew into a cloud of balloons. O
rather they looked like balloons. They floated pa
some thirty feet away, looking like dark gross bats a
reeking of cordite. It was flashless-propellant fl
We did a sharp turn, gained and lost height, a
resumed our course.

" Nice friendly stuff, that."

" It smells bloody awful, anyhow."

From a few miles away, the air above a heav
defended target always appears impossible to penetr
without catastrophe. There seem to be no g
between the searchlights, no breaks in the pattern
gunfire. The gaps appear only as one goes into t
area which has seemed devoid of them. We thread
our way methodically towards the centre of the tar
area, changing course and altitude as the occasi
demanded. The thin persistent cloud still obscur
the earth. It was too thick for the minor phenome
of bewilderment, with which Bremen is richly endow
on a clear night, to be seen. One could see below
apart from the searchlights and the guns—only f
great areas of fire and the odd valley in the clo
formation which corresponded with the line of
Weser. Just on the far side of that valley was a lo
stretch of fire, which all the evidence suggested
in the dock area of Bremen.

" I think we'll let them go over that fire straig
ahead. We're not going to see anything better."

" O.K. I'll open the bomb doors."

" Someone else has just dropped his on that fire

" Straight and level now for half a minute . . .

minute more. . . . I am going to let them go now. . . . ombs gone."

"Take a photograph just for luck. Something ight come out."

Getting out of Bremen seemed to take much longer an getting in. We headed for the sea, forty-five iles away. To our port Wilhelmshaven was still utting up a spirited performance; away to the arboard Cuxhaven—which is somewhat *sui generis* n the way of defences—was doing likewise; Heligo-nd, some sixty-five miles ahead, was permitting self the luxury of a minor, but vicious, hate. They ere invaluable landmarks.

We were flying into a strong headwind now, and took us twenty-five minutes to reach the sea. For e first twenty miles we were shot at more or less ontinuously, if never with any great degree of ccuracy. Then the fire became intermittent. One ould fly along unmolested for half a minute or so; hen, just as one had begun to feel that the sea must e underneath earlier than one had expected, a little nake's tongue of fire would flash through a gap in the loud. The last stretch over enemy occupied territory s always trying: the coastline takes an unconscionably ong time in coming up, one's mood is one of appre-ensive anti-climax. On a cloudy night (with the dded complication of flakships causing confusion ome miles out to sea) one is never quite sure when ne has in fact left the land behind. On this occasion e could tell within a few miles when we were out to ea by observing the behaviour of Cuxhaven, Wilhelms-aven, Heligoland and the more demonstrative risians and taking bearings.

We went far enough out to sea to keep clear of the risians, and then turned on to a westerly course. lmost immediately after doing so we saw a fighter. e was about half a mile away to our starboard, almost xactly at our height, flying very fast in the direction f Heligoland. If we had continued out to sea half minute or so longer our courses would have con-erged.

"I think I'd get underneath this cloud if I were ou. It's too bloody light up here."

"I think you've got something there."

We descended bumpily through several layers of trato-cumulus. It was like going down into a very eep and very dark basement in an old-fashioned lift. ventually we saw the sea, and a few hundred feet ower the contours of Holland some twenty miles way to our port. There was a line of gunfire for fty miles down the coast, aimed at aircraft returning verland.

Flying back across the North Sea is always a boring usiness. The navigator still has some work to do, ut the pilot generally hands over to "George," his automatic deputy, and (assuming the aircraft to be undamaged) there is nothing much for him and the rest of the crew to do except eat their rations and chew gum, keeping an eye open for enemy fighters and our own aircraft in distress. We saw nothing across the three hundred miles of sea except one Wellington flying slowly almost at sea level and (when we got near the coast) showers of flame-floats from aircraft taking drifts. Waiting for the English coast to come up is invariably trying. The east coast of Great Britain is remarkably unobtrusive: on a dark night in winter as often as not it is quite invisible; even on a bright short night near midsummer (such as this) it is none too obvious. We did not detect it until it was only about fifteen miles distant. But, thanks to good navigation, when it came it was exactly the bit of coast required.

Across the three hundred miles of sea we had seen precisely two aircraft, one belonging to either side. In the sixty miles between the coast and our base we saw at least twenty—Stirlings, Halifaxes, Lancasters, Wellingtons, Hampdens—making for home. As we passed over, we heard half a dozen aerodromes marshalling their flocks.

"Hello Carol A Apple, Monkey answering. Aerodrome one thousand feet. Over to you."

"Hello Dormouse C Charlie, Rattle calling. Pancake. Over to you."

"Hello Chamber, Plover D Donald calling. Can I pancake?"

As we passed over East Anglia the dawn came up. The sky was red and fiery in the east.

"With that sky, there won't be any Ops to-night."

"That's rather a pity. I wouldn't mind taking another crack at that joint if only one could see it properly."

We passed over canals, villages, towns; they looked dirty and unreal, protruding from underneath a white mist like cotton wool. A few minutes before we got within call of our own base the navigator became aware that he was hungry.

"Mr. P.M.C., what's there for breakfast?"

"Bacon and eggs, I hope."

"There had bloody well better be."

"I told the Mess Sergeant."

"His idea of breakfast after flying is bully beef and salad."

"He'll bloody well get murdered if there aren't bacon and eggs."

We landed just after five o'clock in almost broad daylight. Just before landing the front gunner put his foot through the perspex floor of his turret and blasphemed horribly. In the dispersal we got the news from the ground crew.

"How many are back yet?"

"Twelve down including you, Sir, and V Victor's circling the aerodrome now. There's only F Freddie still to come."

"Do you know how they got on?"

"Flight Sergeant Brown got shot up by a fighter and came back on one engine. No one else had any trouble that I've heard of. They are bombing up all the kites again immediately for to-night."

We had been six hours and fifteen minutes in the air. It had been, on the whole, just about an average night.

DEREK VERSCHOYLE

CRUMBS OF COMFORT FOR LORD WARDINGTON

The so-called rich after paying their rates and taxes and other inescapable commitments . . . will not have a penny of free income with which to buy a crust of bread.—Lord Wardington, Chairman of Lloyd's Bank, in the House of Lords.

I sing the super-taxed, the starving ranks
Not of the masses, but the millionaires,
Not Thames Embankment, but the City Banks,
The Stock Exchange, the hungry Bulls and Bears;
I sing of shoulders bowed by weight of shares
And wealthy men, inadequately fed,
And whether God will listen to their prayers
To buy Lord Wardington a crust of bread.

I will have no more patience with the cranks
Who prate of poverty and carping cares;
This shall be first of all my party planks:
To help the wretched rich in their affairs,
Cast down the lowly, kick them down the stairs,
Exalting bankers whom the poor have bled—
And this shall be my battle-cry: "Who dares
To buy Lord Wardington a crust of bread?"

Now from the battlefield of burning tanks
Shall rise my slogan when the cannon blares;
Rommel shall pause between his sandy pranks
And blush unseen (wasted on desert airs)
But I will to the Dorchester, where there's
A crust or two (with *couvert*). There I'll spread
Crumbs of Austerity before the chairs
And buy Lord Wardington a crust of bread.

Prince of Threadneedle Street, see how the heirs
Of Dives now are disinherited!
And who (while Lazarus lives upon éclairs)
Will buy Lord Wardington a crust of bread?

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THE MOVIES

"The Fighting French," March of Time

"The Pride of the Yankees," at the Gaumont

Well-timed as usual, and with a wider appeal than recent numbers in the " March of Time," comes a film about the Fighting French. This rapid survey includes some tragic glimpses of the past. The abortive stirring of Fascism in de la Rocque and Doriot; the Front Populaire; the Maginot Line; Hitler's break-through; occupation. No one, whether he has loved the French people and their civilisation or not, could fail to be stirred by certain of these scenes. We may be inured now, as cinema-goers, to empty Paris streets, soup queues, Hitler gazing at the Eiffel Tower, Pétain doddering out of the conference room; but still a new shot or two will revive the old anguish. Laval: that amalgam of childish gesture and malevolence, seated at his desk in Vichy, rouses hatred afresh, and the sight of Blum and Herriot, caught by the newsreel, brings a flush of feeling we may almost have forgotten. Other notable moments have been scooped by the " March of Time " out of their voluminous library; de Gaulle as a colonel in a tank regiment and the author of a little book on strategy which no one except the Nazis heeded.

The whole story can't, of course, be crammed into twenty minutes. Giraud isn't there or the French soldiers who shared in Dieppe or the pilots who have fought over England and the Continent; but there are outposts of the struggle which rarely get into the news—New Caledonia, of special interest to Americans, and French Equatorial Africa, a vital source and stepping-ground for supplies to Egypt. More material, no doubt, will go to making a document of the North Africa campaign. The newsreels this week have a rather meagre and unexciting first instalment of the Great Convoy and landings in Algeria. Since, militarily, the invasion had been so brilliantly planned, it is a pity that something could not have been arranged to make the initial pictures more striking. The B.B.C., for example, provided a good dramatic half-hour on the subject last week.

Otherwise the screens are empty. Gary Cooper in an immensely long, immensely tedious piece about a baseball champion. The grandeurs and miseries of a draughts player might be more boring, but I doubt it. With a background of baseball games that all look the same, even Gary Cooper doesn't get a chance. A momma who for a long time remains his " best girl," cups and medals, horseshoes of roses, a cripple boy, a whimsy wifie, a farewell speech; which is worst of these will be eagerly debated. My own vote goes for the scenes with wifie near the end when he knows he is going to die and she knows he is going to die, but he doesn't know that she knows, so that they can cry behind each other's backs. I am sorry about this film because I like Gary Cooper.

I am sorry also that last week I made a mistake about Bing Crosby and Rudy Vallee. Many well-wishers have written pointing out to me what a mistake I have made. Good Lord! The real mistake, though, was trying to pretend that I could tell one crooner from another. I can't.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Home and Beauty," at the Playhouse

Does it date, this twenty-year-old comedy-farce of Mr. Maugham's? Only in the sense that no one—except possibly Mr. Noel Coward—is writing plays so witty and well-shaped to-day. The traces of period are even topical: coupons, fuel shortage, doing one's bit and making one's pile, belong to the present, and the future is eerily invoked by an armistice and husbands returning from the fray. Otherwise there is no question of dating. Victoria (Isabel Jeans) is a wonderful egotist with an adoring husband; it is unlucky that she should turn out to have another adoring husband, a prisoner of war believed to be dead, and that when he returns there should be two of them, both husbands and both D.S.O.'s. Mr. Maugham extracts the fun from this situation with the utmost elegance. There seems hardly enough material—once the husbands have got together and agreed each to retire in favour of the other—for a third act; but a final burst of fantasy is provided by the equivocal zeal of the husbands and arrangements for a divorce. *Home and Beauty* has style; something of the style that keeps *The Importance of Being Earnest* untarnished. This revival at the Playhouse is distinguished by admirable light acting. Miss Isabel Jeans and Mr. Ronald Squire, especially, are effortlessly gay.

Correspondence

SOCIALIST EDUCATION

SIR,—Nothing is more important to-day than that the ordinary citizen shall grow up with a clear understanding of how a planned Socialist economy works. Had we not been so shamefully ignorant of the tremendous achievements of the U.S.S.R. in this last 20 years, we should have insisted years ago on close collaboration with our Soviet allies and so have forestalled Hitler's bid for European domination.

It will be disastrous if, as Mr. J. P. M. Miller's letter suggests, we still have to rely for our Socialist education on voluntary organisations with such slender resources as the National Council of Labour Colleges. No boy or girl ought henceforth to leave school without being given the chance to understand how the Russians organise their industrial and agricultural production. It is to be hoped that, when the new Education Act comes before Parliament, the Labour Movement, from its War Cabinet members downwards, will unanimously insist that the knowledge be made part of the education of every child. We shall be completely betraying our trust to the next generation if we allow them to grow up as ignorant of contemporary economic developments as we ourselves have been.

R. ST. JOHN READE

SIR,—Mr. Millar's letter raises an important issue which seems to indicate a welcome departure in the policy of the N.C.L.C. He implicitly criticises intellectuals for their lack of assistance and appeals to them (it is no slander to assert that N.S. & N. readers are largely intellectuals) now to come forward and take a part in the work of the N.C.L.C.

Up to now it has been largely understood that the N.C.L.C. had no use for intellectuals whose minds had been nurtured in educational institutions reflecting the class outlook of existing society. For instance, the leading article of the October issue of " Plebs " states that the Plebs League, of which the N.C.L.C. is the successor, filled the need " not just for an educational organisation controlled by the working class, but (for) an education of *a different kind* from that provided by the orthodox educational institutions." This " different kind of education " has meant the rejection, in fact the denial, of the possibility of any impartial approach to a subject, and a slavish adherence to questionable interpretations of Marxian doctrines.

Does Mr. Millar's appeal for the help of intellectuals mean that the N.C.L.C. is abandoning this view of a " different kind of education," and that it is at last realised that a deliberately prejudiced form of " education " may breed bigots and fanatics, but will never produce that wide understanding of social problems which is so vitally needed in the rank and file of the trade union and labour movement to-day?

There must be many intellectuals who see the need for the kind of work which the N.C.L.C. can do and who will be glad to help, provided it is understood that the job it sets out to do is not to propagate doctrines but to foster independent judgment and to teach methods of social study and enquiry.

F. V. PICKSTOCK

SIR,—I welcome the opportunity afforded by Mr. Millar's letter on my article of October 31st to express my appreciation of the work of the N.C.L.C.

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But I would like to ask Mr. Millar whether, as one would imagine from the general tone of his letter, he is indeed satisfied that the Labour Party has adequately fulfilled its task of educating the workers in socialism. If he is, then my criticisms are superfluous. I would hesitate to put my faith in an organisation lost in complacency. If he is not, then I trust he will cease to be so thin-skinned as to resent criticism. May not such touchiness be one reason for the failure of university professors, lecturers and graduates to assist the work of the N.C.L.C.? The fault is not wholly one-sided.

A. M.

LATIN

SIR,—I was delighted to see in THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION of November 14th, the letter from Olga Beebee and Gillian Cross calling attention to the power wielded by the dead hand of the past.

I passed the General Schools Exam. with Matric. exemption in June, and the result was considered to indicate that I would stand a good chance of obtaining a State Scholarship in two or three years' time, should I pass the Higher Schools Exam. with Intermediate exemption. I heartily dislike Latin, but I was faced with the knowledge that unless I continued to study it I should be precluded from entrance to a university with a view to an Arts degree. I have no idea yet of the career I want to take up, and was without the help which would have come from a decision. I wished to study German instead, and, perhaps foolishly, decided to do so.

Every year many find themselves in the same situation and, as a result, some of them have to spend—or waste—their valuable time studying Latin, instead of a subject they enjoy, because they intend to go to a university.

MARGARET FELLS

Copthall County School.

SIR,—Your correspondent's letter on the value of Latin unwittingly brings to light one of the mistakes of educationalists to-day. In my opinion, in the allocation of free places in grant-aided secondary schools, too much stress is laid on intelligence and too little on the ability to work hard. Indeed, I have not heard of the latter quality's being considered necessary or tested, yet many teachers in State schools will agree that a child of normal intelligence and good powers of concentration will derive more benefit from a secondary school education than a child of higher intelligence but little will or ability to work hard.

Latin is an excellent test of both these qualities simultaneously, and I suggest that when the universities insist on its retention in their various entrance examinations, they are aware of this. It requires both hard work in acquiring the necessary grammar and intelligence in applying it, and no child can do well in this subject without possessing these qualities.

If, however, only the language side of Latin is stressed, much of its value is lost. To me no Latin course is complete without the study of Roman history and literature and the repercussions of the latter on modern literature. Possibly this is the reason that your correspondents fail to see the value of Latin. They appear to have approached the subject as a useless infliction and have not been led to understand the enormous influence, cultural, political and linguistic, of the Romans on the civilisation of Western Europe. How can they hope to study English, modern languages or history without this knowledge? It is reassuring to see their enthusiasm for the future, but they cannot disassociate it from the past.

JOYCE PEPPIETTE

HEINRICH ADAM

SIR,—Mr. Bodson, the Luxemburg Minister of Justice, has commented on the London Diarist's statement, published on October 3rd, that a German worker named Heinrich Adam gave the signal for the Luxemburg strike. Mr. Bodson's letter, which you published on October 31st, states that another Luxemburg worker called Biren is reported to have given the signal for the strike, and that Adam had been a citizen of Luxemburg since 1934. With regard to this controversy perhaps a few facts may be of interest:

1. On September 10th, the German authorities in Luxemburg announced that the worker Heinrich Adam had been executed, having on August 31st, given on the factory siren the signal to strike to his fellow workers. The fact that Adam was German-born made his "crime" particularly serious, the announcement stressed. Obviously the whole thing touched a sensitive spot in racialist circles.

2. After careful investigation I can state that at the time when Mr. Laski wrote his Diary, and even up to the middle of October, there was apparently no information in informed circles in this country which cast any doubt on the announcement published in Luxemburg.

3. Nearly one-fifth of the Luxemburg industrial workers are foreigners—Germans, Italians, etc. It was a well-known fact that according to the Luxemburg Labour Law foreign workers could under certain conditions be elected as shop stewards, even if they had still retained their old citizenship. Adam was one of these shop stewards and at that even before 1934, if my information is correct. As regards the Luxemburg strike, nothing has so far been heard of any strike-breaking action on the part of the foreign workers; Mr. Bodson's report (mentioned in his letter) has of course not yet been released.

4. The fact that foreign workers did perhaps lead the strike together with Luxemburg workers does not prove anything as regards resistance in the countries from which these workers came. However, the strike emphasises once more the well-known heroism of the Luxemburg Labour movement, and shows that the strength of its ideas proved to be stronger than Nazi propaganda. It is of historical but of no actual political interest which of the two heroic Luxemburg workers who fought and died together gave the strike signal—the trade unionist Adam, who as a child came to Luxemburg, or the trade unionist Biren, who was born in Luxemburg.

As for the German workers in Luxemburg, only one fact is of importance: in threatening Germans in Luxemburg by the form of their announcement of September 10th, the Nazi authorities have shown that they consider there are so many Germans in Luxemburg who sympathise with Luxemburg Labour's fight for freedom that steps have to be taken to frighten them publicly.

WALTER AUERBACH

STATE BURSARIES

SIR,—Under present circumstances, when we hear so much about fair shares for all it seems to me that the position of regular students in universities compares very unfavourably with that of the students to whom the State sees fit to award bursaries in radio and engineering.

These State Bursars receive from the Board of Education sufficient money to cover the cost of tuition fees, maintenance, all incidentals, and are left with money to spare. Students who win scholarships to universities receive varying smaller amounts which cover, usually, the tuition fees and part of the cost of maintenance.

Yet these students—I speak mainly of, course, of science students, in particular the physicists and mathematicians—have to take an almost exactly similar course in radio, in addition to their normal curriculum, and are, at the end of their course, placed in exactly similar jobs. They receive no help from the State, not even an allowance for extra books, etc., which have to be obtained.

It seems rather unfair that these students, who, judging from first-hand knowledge and a study of the qualifications necessary to obtain a State Bursary, are of definitely superior mental calibre than the State Bursars, should receive no financial aid from the Government, for they are fulfilling just as important a function in the furthering of the war effort.

Perhaps there is some reasoning which has led the Government to take its present course. If so, it would be interesting to hear it.

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One wonders, also, why in each case, both Engineering and Radio Bursary offers have been made at such times as result in the recipients being forced to start their course well after the beginning of the academic year. Surely if there was some excuse in the case of the Radio Bursaries there can be none in the case of the Engineering Cadetships. W. G. Clouter

University College of the South-West
of England, Exeter

AMERICAN WRITERS

Sir,—At its weekly meeting on Wednesday the Writers' War Board unanimously approved this statement:

We severely condemn Theodore Dreiser for saying the other day in Canada that he would rather see the Germans in control of England than the "aristocratic horse-riding snobs of the existing regime."

It was not aristocratic snobs who rescued the British Army at Dunkerque, or who, greatly outnumbered, blasted the Luftwaffe from the English skies in 1940, or who stopped Rommel in his tracks last month. The people of the British Commonwealth are fighting this war as our brave and faithful allies, as are the Russian people and the Chinese people.

Not being lawyers we do not know whether Theodore Dreiser's utterance was treasonable in the legal sense, but certainly our enemies would pay him well for his disservice to our country's cause. We profoundly regret that an American writer of Mr. Dreiser's eminence should thus insult and offend our allies and commit so shameful an act of sabotage against our government and people.

Sept. 24th, 1942 Writers' War Board

LIBEL THEN AND NOW

Sir,—After reading Landor and Cobbett on Wilberforce, Professor Laski feels that "the rigours of our law of libel deprive us of controversial joys which must have been a great comfort to Bentham's generation." But the imaginary conversation between Romilly and Wilberforce, which he quotes, was not published till 1846, fourteen years after Bentham's death and thirteen after Wilberforce's. As for Cobbett, he was fined £500 for describing the viceroy of Ireland as "a very eminent sheep-feeder from Cambridgeshire" with "a wooden head," and his continued campaign against members of a repressive Tory government earned him two years in Newgate.

The Libel Act of 1792, though professedly a reform to entitle writers and printers to trial by jury, was designed by Pitt to strengthen ministerial powers for the repression of criticism. One of the first victims under the Act was Tom Paine for publishing his *Rights of Man*, and in 1795 the reactionary Lord Chancellor Eldon boasted with satisfaction to the House of Lords that "there had been more prosecutions for libel within the last two years than there had been for twenty years before." When it is recalled that the first John Walter of the *Times* served sixteen months in Newgate for libel, that Landor's *Commentary on Trotter's Memoirs of Fox* was suppressed by his own publisher, that a Barnstaple billposter was sentenced to six months' imprisonment for distributing Shelley's *Declaration of Rights*, and that Leigh Hunt and his brother received two years in gaol for criticism of the Prince Regent, it seems that Bentham's generation paid heavily for its "controversial joys."

Malcolm Elwin

SEWAGE SLUDGE

Sir,—"H. P. K." seems to have misunderstood the purpose of my article, which was to arouse public interest in the broad facts (not the technical details) of a public problem. The case for composts can be argued on various grounds; but to the ordinary person the obvious advantages of the system at Maidenhead and Leatherhead are that it disposes of both sewage *and refuse*, and creates a much larger quantity of fertiliser than we should obtain from sewage alone.

As to the extent to which sewage is already being used *The Surveyor* (November 14th, 1941) estimated that well over half the annual production was wasted, and that "besides the current production, huge accumulations of material exist in some places." So, in spite of H. P. K.'s very cheering experience, it seems that a problem really exists worth consideration by a Government which penalises persons for throwing away tram tickets. Reginald Reynolds

PLANS FOR LONDON

Sir,—In Mr. David Lowles's letter in your issue of November 7th, disappointment was expressed at the evidence in a recent A.B.C.A. issue "that the overwhelming majority of men stated their preference for semi-detached houses rather than flats." In an editorial note to the letter it is contended that "it is largely because they have had experience only of ill-constructed flats that so many prefer houses." My experience may be of interest.

In the course of numerous lectures on Planning and Housing that I have given to the Forces I have sought opinions (including some from women) on this question of flats and houses, and on many occasions I have asked the audiences to vote. But before doing so I have been careful to indicate the possibilities of flat development. I have indicated that where space is limited much more could be done with the land if tall blocks of flats are erected rather than small houses each with its own garden. I have given details of the numerous amenities which could be included in a well-developed estate of flats, such as lifts, central heating, crêches, nursery schools, swimming pools, tennis courts, allotments, playgrounds for children and clinics, all in the area that would be fully occupied by one-family houses with gardens without these amenities. I have stated that if the blocks were high they could be built far apart, so that the shadow of one never falls on the façade of another. I have cited the arguments of architect-sociologists like Walter Gropius and Le Corbusier, and the examples of the flats in Vienna, and some recent flats in Moscow where many of the amenities enumerated are enjoyed. I have asked the audiences to vote, not on their own experience of flats, and not on the indifferent examples so well known in this country, but on the assumption that they could have all the amenities connected with flat life that I have mentioned; but still the great majority prefer the one-family house and garden to the extent of about 98 per cent. of men and 85 per cent. of women. Great preference for the semi-detached or detached house seems to be based on two main reasons: the sense of freedom that the utmost privacy gives, which they associate most completely with a detached house, and the feeling that in a small house one can make it more completely to one's liking than is possible in a flat.

Still, I want to be certain that the rejection of the flats and the preference for the small house and garden is based on knowledge and understanding, so if any of your readers know of any other advantages possible in flat development I shall be most happy to put them to the men in the Forces to whom I lecture.

Arnold Whittick

NEXT STEPS IN INDIA

Sir,—The *Times* has been publishing under this heading shoals of letters from eminent men with vast Indian experience and interests. But strangely no one seems to have suggested the very first step that should be taken towards solving that Indian problem; and that step is for Mr. Amery to relinquish his portfolio. No man is less a *persona grata* with the Indians than Mr. Amery, whose public utterances of the last twenty years are all well known in India. The very carefully *selected* speeches of his that the Oxford University Press has recently issued under an alluring title will not, as even Mr. Amery should know, deceive any Indian. A second step will be to close down the India Office and all that that stands for.

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JONATHAN CAPE

BOOKS IN GENERAL

"As elusive as ever." Repeating these words aloud I goggled at the clock and emerged from a dream that might have been (though in fact it was not) about Mr. E. M. Forster. As elusive as ever; last time I saw Mr. Forster he was bundled up ahead of me at a performance of the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, and his enjoyment—as I thought—of the fat lady-killer added to mine; after the first act, though, he had gone. In print he comes and goes no less mysteriously; at one moment there, at another away. It's years since I opened *A Passage to India*,* not knowing where the title came from, wondering that Anglo-India should be squeezed with such gentleness on to the map of English literature. Or on to any map for that matter. My reading was furious, idle, unpremeditated: the sort of reading that leads, when one is young, to zigzags across authors rather than along their grain. Forster's grain wasn't at all then what I was looking for, and though his book went a long way towards solving a "mysterious East," it implanted in my mind the far more mysterious Mr. Forster. Other novels of his, approached in a hurry, turned the casual reader away. Sometimes I could see what he was getting at, and was impatient with aims neither extreme nor simple enough; more often I was out of my depth, buoyed up by the phrases like water-wings that keep the head high and the toes an inch off the bottom. It is a mistake for anyone in the mood or at the age for whole-hog writing, to try to come to terms with a half-hog writer like E. M. Forster. He won't let his characters go; they begin to let go, they fall in love or pack their bags for Italy, but in love or in Italy the little things pull them back; they swell, they subside, they apologise, they are touching and ridiculous, they return to themselves. Mr. Forster's contemporaries—those to be mentioned in the same breath—were all, in one way or another, going the whole hog. Virginia Woolf was pushing the novel over the borderline into poetry, an impressionist poetry of pinpoints in time and space; with Joyce we penetrated—what anguish this was!—to the tick-tock of the brain; Lawrence threw away the mind altogether, excising it like an appendix; Huxley was candid and hard and bright, the new electricity that had to be laid on. To each belonged a territory, and a following.

But what could one pin down as the Forster quality? Irony? The trim high spirits and a subtlety in dialogue may suggest Jane Austen.

> Abandoning his bicycle, which fell before a servant could catch it, the young man sprang up on the verandah. He was all animation. "Hamidullah, Hamidullah! am I late?" he cried.
>
> "Do not apologise," said his host. "You are always late."
>
> "Kindly answer my question. Am I late? Has Mahmoud Ali eaten all the food? If so, I go elsewhere. Mr. Mahmoud Ali, how are you?"
>
> "Thank you, Dr. Aziz, I am dying."
>
> "Dying before your dinner? Oh, poor Mahmoud Ali!"
>
> "Hamidullah here is actually dead. He passed away just as you rode up on your bike."
>
> "Yes, that is so," said the other. "Imagine us both as addressing you from another and a happier world."
>
> "Does there happen to be such a thing as a hookah in that happier world of yours?"
>
> "Aziz, don't chatter. We are having a very sad talk . . ."

Indian voices. Now English:

> "As if one could avoid seeing them," sighed Mrs. Lesley.
>
> "I've avoided," said Miss Quested. "Excepting my own servant, I've scarcely spoken to an Indian since landing."
>
> "Oh, lucky you."
>
> "But I want to see them."
>
> She became the centre of an amused group of ladies. One said: "Wanting to see Indians! How new that sounds!" Another: "Natives! Why, fancy!" A third, more serious, said: "Let me explain. Natives don't respect one any the more after meeting one, you see."
>
> "That occurs after so many meetings."
>
> But the lady, entirely stupid and friendly, continued: "What I mean is, I was a nurse before my marriage, and came across them a good deal, so I know. I really do know the truth about Indians. A most unsuitable position for any Englishwoman—I was a nurse in a Native State. One's only hope was to hold sternly aloof."
>
> "Even from one's patients?"
>
> "Why, the kindest thing one can do to a native is to let him die," said Mrs. Callender.
>
> "How if he went to heaven?" asked Mrs. Moore, with a gentle but crooked smile.
>
> "He can go where he likes so long as he doesn't come near me. They give me the creeps."
>
> "As a matter of fact, I have thought what you were saying about heaven, and that is why I am against Missionaries," said the lady who had been a nurse. "I am all for Chaplains, but all against Missionaries. Let me explain."
>
> But before she could do so the Collector intervened.

But fit him to the Austen mould and he breaks out in a hundred directions foreign to the author of *Mansfield Park;* poetry, travel, the classics, morals, a prophetic sense of the times—all these rise up to contradict the idea of trim, ironical comedy. Largeness is there, if only hinted at and shaping the pattern. There is a kind of enlightenment in the air of a Forster novel which precludes any character from being forever shut in by stupidity or habit. The prigs, for example—and what novelists, besides Jane Austen and Meredith, have delineated the higher prig with so exquisite a sympathy and sense of comedy?—are priggish, conscious of their priggery, and not, one may feel in the end, altogether unjustified in their reservations. In everyone there are a prig and a battler for life, side by side, and circumstance more often than not decides which shall speak first; we experience this time after time in Mr. Forster's novels. He excels in those moments when one gets on one's high horse, inhales, loses courage and falls off.

Character, then? No; all his men and women, even the most sympathetically drawn, are minor characters. I don't remember the names or the sharp identities of people in *Where Angels Fear to Tread* or *A Room with a View*, though I was reading about them only five days ago; and this isn't wholly due to bad memory. Caroline and Philip, Lucy, George Emerson, Mr. Beebe—I've had to look them up—are just right, are alive, but they don't live willy-nilly when we have packed them back on the shelf. Even while we are reading, Caroline is always liable to become, distantly, Miss Abbott; this indeed is one of the many lifelike devices employed by Forster; his most distinct personalities are always fading, like the wireless. One remembers the circumstances, the intellectual and social atmosphere, the conflict between those who go on growing and those who have settled. They "connect" or not, they clear or defend muddle; intelligent and stupid, neurotic and healthy, they never wander very far from a norm. Rebels, perhaps, but their rebellion is tempered by acceptance of a place in society; improvers but not—except at moments or in a crisis—sticks. They are quietly remarkable, even the lesser figures, idiosyncratic, and distinguished by a talent for the minor adjustments which will make things just right instead of roughly so: qualities, in fact, we admire in Mr. Forster as a writer. His characters, writing a letter or talking their ordinary, write and talk more pointedly than any other characters in modern fiction.

Style, then? He has, if you look into it, the most individual and uniformly pleasing style of any living novelist. Where he triumphs in novel, essay or story, the style seems the perfect soil in which such-and-such remarks and circumstances and characters should grow; there is no disproportion between the way of saying it and the thing said; colloquial and poetic flow together as naturally as mild-and-bitter; it is a style of brilliant short-cuts, a talking style, a style full of surprises and easy playfulness; a poet, a schoolboy, a spinster, a mystic, a don, contribute their impulses to that style; it is the style, surprisingly, in an age productive of literary hybrids, of the pure novel. Precisely because in literature Mr. Forster has delightful manners instead of a manner, his utterances always have the air of combining perfect art with spontaneity. He never, never overstates. The essays reprinted in *Abinger Harvest* completely escape the brittle archness of light and wise entertainment. Re-read "The Doll Souse" and "Word-Making and Sound-Taking"; the charm of the last, especially, is as elusive as Proust's "little phrase of Vinteuil" which comes into it.

"Elusive"—one is back there, without having been able to catch much on the way. Another epithet might be added: "elusive and settled." That is how all Forster's writings strike us; all except *The Longest Journey*, which seems unsettled and a failure. Being settled and yet continually restless and inviting puts Forster eventually among the Chehovs, the writers who offer a roof to wandering humanity. There is no progression in his works; he sprang fully armed; his first novel, *Where Angels Fear to Tread*, is as mature and finished as *A Passage to India*, the last. Most readers and critics have decided, rightly no doubt, that *A Passage to India* is his masterpiece. Certainly it is his "biggest" novel, landscapes and figures are of a larger order than usual, and in Dr. Aziz Forster has created his most memorable character. But magnitude seems here beside the point; *Where Angels Fear to Tread* is smaller but in no way inferior.

What changes has *A Passage to India* undergone with the years? None, so far as I can see; except that racial tension, the disparity between Englishman and Indian, which once startled, is now the chief topic in the club at Chandrapore and can be mentioned in *Times* leaders. Mood and fact in this novel mingle beautifully. In Chandrapore, with its empty sunlight and gossip and siestas and flies and racial warfare, we seem to grasp the secret of India: the secret that there is none. The anticlimax of the visit to the caves is wonderfully managed. A legend is exploded, and yet something legendary remains.

> They are dark caves. Even when they open towards the sun, very little light penetrates down the entrance tunnel into the circular chamber. There is little to see, and no eye to see it, until the visitor arrives for his five minutes, and strikes a match. Immediately another flame rises in the depths of the rock and moves towards the surface like an imprisoned spirit: the walls of the circular chamber have been most marvellously polished. The two flames approach and strive to unite, but cannot, because one of them breathes air, the other stone. A mirror inlaid with lovely colours divides the lovers, delicate stars of pink and grey interpose, exquisite nebulæ, shadings fainter than the tail of a comet or the midday moon, all the evanescent life of the granite, only here visible. Fists and fingers thrust above the advancing soil—here at last is their skin, finer than any covering acquired by the animals, smoother than windless water, more voluptuous than love. The radiance increases, the flames touch one another, kiss, expire. The cave is dark again, like all the caves.

And out of the caves blow the winds of hysteria—an English woman assaulted by a "native"!—which culminates in the melodrama and farce of the trial. Our sympathies for the delightful Dr. Aziz are fanned, then he lets us down, we are disappointed, but still he is the "dear fellow" we met after dinner in the mosque. The only faults in the book seem to me the character of Mrs. Moore, who collapses suddenly and becomes a hateful mummy before passing into legend, and the lukewarm lovers, Ronny and Adela. It is a novel that, like *Oblomov*, inevitably tails off. But the decline in this case is managed with perfect art. Having read, and now after sixteen years reread, *A Passage to India*, I still can't say exactly what lesson it implants, wherein the magic lies. Innumerable small touches and quietly beguiling phrases have created a spell, which ceases with the last sentence. "This music crept by me upon the waters": Mr. Forster is the master of the half-heard and enchanting strain in prose.

G. W. STONIER

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* *A Passage to India.* By E. M. Forster. With an introduction by Peter Burra. Everyman. 3s.

EGYPTIAN VARIETY

The Legacy of Egypt. Edited by S. R. K. GLANVILLE. *Oxford Press.* 10s.

Egypt is on the front page—where, indeed, she has been pretty regularly at intervals over the last five or six thousand years. In any case, the moment is well chosen for a *Festschrift* in her honour under the auspices of Oxford University. It is true that the form of such books, a string of pearls each secreted by a different learned authority, does not make for easy reading; still less does it make for easy reviewing. The effect is apt to be like a music-hall show in which every turn is either too short or too long, in which there are too many performing seals and not enough tramp cyclists, and in which three comedians come on in succession and sing three different settings of " Waltz me round once again, Willie." Though in the present instance things are not as bad as that, the manager has been put in rather a fix by having to try to persuade the audience that this Command Performance is no mere ordinary variety show but a regular drama with a plot.

The Legacy of Egypt. Twenty years ago there could have been no more fertile theme. For in the palmy diffusionist days of Perry and Elliot Smith the legacy of Egypt included every single item that makes up modern civilisation. Agriculture, dragons, the death penalty, trans-ocean travel, lipsticks, war, the gold standard, Stonehenge, the immortality of the soul and the two-party system—all of these were more or less direct exports from Egypt. But the trade barriers have gone up since then, and to-day only the merest trickle can come through: the shape of the letters of the alphabet (a doubtful starter), Chapters XXII and XXIII of the Book of Proverbs, the seamy side of popular quack-medicine—the wretched quota has to be made up as best it can, with the mimes of Herondas, monasticism in the Churches and Platonic Christianity. So that, with few exceptions, the contributors have thrown up the sponge and admit that our legacy from Egypt can scarcely be detected; or rather they have accepted the get-away suggested by the editor himself, namely, that the true legacy of Egypt is all the knowledge about that country that we have acquired since Napoleon and his *savants* invaded it a century and a half ago In the main, then, what we are presented with is a series of essays depicting various aspects of Egyptian civilisation. But here again the unity turns out to be no more than a façade; for the phrase " Egyptian civilisation " is extended, by a kind of geographical pun, to include Ptolemaic Egypt, Egypt the Roman Province, Byzantine Egypt and the Islamic Egypt of our own age. Thus the later part of the volume includes discussions of the effects of the discoveries of papyri on Greek textual criticism, of Roman provincial administration, of the influence of Gnosticism on the doctrines of Origen, of the financial reforms of Diocletian and of the poetry of Ibn al-Farid—many of them interesting topics in themselves, but rather artificial bedfellows for an Egyptian bed.

The merits of the individual essays are as various as their subject matter. Dr. Alan Gardiner, for instance, feeling (as he himself confesses) slightly inhibited by the " legacy " idea, devotes almost half of his chapter on " Writing and Literature " to a most impartial discussion of whether the inscriptions in an unknown script found by Petrie in Sinai prove that the Phoenician, and hence our own, writing was ultimately derived from the Egyptian. Mr. Engelbach, basing himself on his own and Mr. Lucas's almost unrivalled experience at the Cairo Museum, gives the most authoritative possible summary of the Ancient Egyptians' mechanical and technical processes and of the materials used by them. Mr. Dawson deals equally soundly with Egyptian medicine. Some of the contributors, on the other hand, are inclined to be carried away by enthusiasm for their subject. Thus General Sewell, writing upon " The Calendars and Chronology," declares that the system of calendars instituted in Egypt in the year 3141 B.C. " was in fact the most scientific organisation of calendars which has yet been used by man," and that the Gregorian Calendar represents its " final degradation." Mr. Sloley, again, who is responsible for the chapter on Science, dilates upon the debt owed to Egypt by Greece in this department. " Thales," he says, " and many others after him were profoundly impressed and stimulated by the Egyptian civilisation." Dr. Gardiner happens to provide a sceptical corrective upon this very point: " Thales may indeed have travelled in Egypt, but if he did so he could hardly have come into close relations with the priests, who, moreover, would have looked with extreme disfavour upon his purely physical speculations." But perhaps the most melancholy victim of enthusiasm is Professor Capart, who is ecstatic over every single product of Egyptian Art, who raves equally about the shambles of Karnak and the colonnade at Deir-el-Bahari and cannot discriminate between the portrait heads from El-Amarnah and the quartet of sixty-foot over-inflated gas-bags who sit for ever outside the temple of Abu Simbel gazing into the sunrise. Here again Dr. Gardiner is ready with an antidote: " Most connoisseurs of Egyptian antiquities will have felt at some time or other that the general standard is very low, but they will have taken comfort at the recollection of a few pieces of incomparable beauty and grace."

Such, then, are some of the turns. But others, at least as important, seem to have been unaccountably left out of the programme altogether. Where is the one that gives us the latest views on the pre-historic relations between Egypt and her neighbours? There are two or three prominent artistes who could have been booked for this. And one upon the economic history of early Egypt? A Belgian performer specialises in this highly novel trick. But, strangest of all, where is what should have been the Star Turn of the show—the chapter on Egyptian Religion?—not, needless to say, the eccentric forms of Christianity which happened to flourish in Roman Egypt and to which in fact two sections are devoted, but the strangely stratified religion of Ancient Egypt, about which we know so much and so little. And here is Dr. Gardiner, the World Champion in this particular act, positively waiting in the wings and ready to step on to the boards to demonstrate it to us. But we should be impolite, no doubt, to look a Command Performance in the teeth.

JAMES STRACHEY

PERFIDE ALBION

The British Way in Warfare By B. H. LIDDELL HART. Penguin Special. 9d.

This collection of revised and reprinted essays, written from about 1932 onwards, is largely a history of the development of the British army in the years between the two wars. Its opening chapters, however, contain a survey of Britain's " traditional grand strategy " which is the most interesting and provocative part of the book and the most important at this moment. The battle for mechanisation has been won, at any rate on paper, but the controversy over the Second Front is still raging, and Captain Liddell Hart's theories are extremely relevant to it.

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ROUTLEDGE

predatory wars of the eighteenth century and only dropped in the decade before 1914, when Britain entered into an all-in alliance with France. Its technique is essentially commercial. You attack your enemy chiefly by means of blockade, privateering, and sea-borne " commando " raids. You avoid raising a mass army and leave the land fighting as far as possible to continental allies whom you keep going by means of subsidies. While your allies are doing your fighting for you you capture your enemy's overseas trade and occupy his outlying colonies. At the first suitable moment you make peace, either retaining the territories you have captured or using them as bargaining counters. This was, in fact, Britain's characteristic strategy for something like two hundred years, and the term " perfide Albion " was thoroughly justified except in so far as the behaviour of other States was morally similar. The wars of the eighteenth century were waged in a spirit so mercenary that the normal process is reversed, and they seem more " ideological " to posterity than they did to the people who fought in them. But in any case, the " limited aims " strategy is not likely to be successful unless you are willing to betray your allies whenever it pays to do so.

In 1914–18, as is well known, we broke with our past, subordinated our strategy to that of an ally, and lost a million dead. Commenting on this Captain Liddell Hart says: " I can find in the conditions of the war no satisfying explanation of our change. . . . No fundamental cause for a change of historic policy seems to appear. Hence one is inclined to find it in a change of fashion—in the military mode of thought inspired by Clausewitz." Clausewitz is the evil genius of military thought. He taught, or is supposed to have taught, that the proper strategy is to attack your strongest enemy, that nothing is solved except by battle, and that " blood is the price of victory." Fascinated by this theory, Britain " made her navy a subsidiary weapon, and grasped the glittering sword of Continental manufacture."

Now there is something unsatisfactory in tracing an historical change to an individual theorist, because a theory does not gain ground unless material conditions favour it. If Britain ceased, at any rate for four years, from being " perfide Albion," there were deeper reasons than Sir Henry Wilson's tie-up with the French General Staff. To begin with it is very doubtful whether our " traditional " strategy is workable any longer. In the past it really depended on the balance of power, more and more precarious from 1870 onwards, and on geographical advantages which modern technical developments have lessened. After 1890 Britain was no longer the only naval power, and moreover the whole scope of naval warfare had diminished. With the abandonment of sail navies became less mobile, the inland seas were inaccessible after the invention of the marine mine, and blockade lost part of its power owing to the science of substitutes and the mechanisation of agriculture. After the rise of modern Germany it was hardly possible for us to dispense with European alliances, and one of the things allies are apt to insist on is that you do your fair share of the fighting. Money subsidies have no meaning when war involves the total effort of every belligerent nation.

The real shortcoming of these stimulating essays, however, lies in Captain Liddell Hart's unwillingness to admit that war has changed its character. " Limited aims " strategy implies that your enemy is very much the same kind of person as yourself; you want to get the better of him, but it is not necessary for your safety to annihilate him or even to interfere with his internal politics. These conditions existed in the eighteenth century and even in the later phases of the Napoleonic wars, but have disappeared in the atomised world in which we are now living. Writing in 1932 or thereabouts, Captain Liddell Hart is able to say, " Has there ever been such a thing as absolute war since nations ceased to exterminate or enslave the defeated ? " The trouble is that they haven't ceased. Slavery, which seemed as remote as cannibalism in 1932, is visibly returning in 1942, and in such circumstances it is impossible to wage the old style of limited profit-making war, intent only on " safeguarding British interests " and making peace at the first opportune moment. As Mussolini has truly said, democracy and totalitarianism cannot exist side by side. It is a curious fact, not much remarked on, that in the present war Britain has, up to date, waged the kind of war that Captain Liddell Hart advocates. We have fought no large-scale Continental campaign, we have used up one ally after another, and we have acquired territories far larger and, potentially, far richer, than those we have lost. Yet neither Captain Liddell Hart nor anyone else would argue from this that the war has gone well for us. Nobody advocates that we should simply wipe up the remaining French and Italian colonies and then make a negotiated peace with Germany, because even the most ignorant person sees that such a peace would not be final. Our survival depends on the destruction of the present German political system, which implies the destruction of the German army. It is difficult not to feel that Clausewitz was right in teaching that " you must concentrate against the main enemy, who must be overthrown first," and that " the armed forces form the true objective," at least in any war where there is a genuine ideological issue.

To some extent Captain Liddell Hart's tactical theories are separable from his strategic ones, and here his prophecies have been all too well justified by events. No military writer in our time has done more to enlighten public opinion. But his justified war with the blimps has perhaps overcoloured his judgment. The people who scoffed at mechanisation and still labour to reduce military training to a routine of barking and stamping are also in favour of mass armies, frontal attacks, bayonet charges and, in general, meaningless bloodshed. Disgusted by the spectacle of Passchendaele, Captain Liddell Hart seems to have ended by believing that wars can be won on the defensive or without fighting—and even, indeed, that a war is better half-won than won outright. That holds good only when your enemy thinks likewise, a state of affairs which disappeared when Europe ceased to be ruled by ar aristocracy.

GEORGE ORWELL

THE MAKING OF PETERSBURG

Palmyra of the North. By CHRISTOPHER MARSDEN. *Faber.* 16*s.*

Mr. Marsden gives us the story of Petersburg from its foundation by Peter the Great in 1703 to the death of the Empress Elizabeth in 1762. His treatment of this rich and unfamiliar subject seems to me rather ill-judged. The book, which shows little sign of being based upon original research, is addressed to the general reader, but he may easily tire of so much information about obscure decorative artists. Above all, it is exasperating to find no illustrations of most of the buildings described. A more enjoyable work could have been made if the author had concentrated either on an account of social life in Petersburg or upon an adequately illustrated history of its architecture. One can, however, excavate a mass of curious information from his pages; and Mr. Marsden writes with persistent enthusiasm. In his imaginative response to the gauds and trappings of the prodigal past he indeed reminds us sometimes of Mr. Sacheverell Sitwell, who contributes to the book an apt introduction.

Leningrad was one of the most beautiful cities that it has been my good fortune to visit. It must

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have been even more beautiful when the buildings were adorned with their original colours—orange and pink, pistachio-green and turquoise-blue. (It was the nineteenth-century Tsars who painted the Winter Palace the sinister and symbolical colour of dried blood.) How far the city and the residences near it have suffered we do not know. Perhaps, says Mr. Sitwell, it is a sign of the barbarism of our age that no report has come to us of the destruction wrought among the buildings there. (Likewise we know nothing of what damage had been done to the Renaissance palaces of Genoa and the Baroque splendours of Naples. Fortunately our rulers have hitherto resisted the demand, as impolitic as it is vulgar, for the bombardment of Rome.) A Stalingrad can be rebuilt, but Leningrad is irreplaceable.

Peter the Great began the city in a Dutch style; the Empress Anne and Elizabeth continued it in a rococo more German than French or Italian. Rastrelli was the ablest and most prolific of the architects imported into Russia. (It is interesting to learn that the Kremlin, so specifically Muscovite in style, was designed chiefly by Italians.) Rastrelli cannot be compared, in my view, with the greatest architects, Wren or Bernini or Gabriel: his taste was more theatrical than exquisite. But he had magnificent opportunities of which he made rich use. Tsarskoe Selo may be "barbarous," but in elevation it is more imaginative than Würzburg or Versailles. He had the invention required for developing a variant of the rococo style that was adapted to the northern light and that expressed the extravagance of the Russian character. Mr. Ramsden ends his book with an account of Cameron, the Scottish architect employed by Catharine to build in a style half Palladian, half Adam. But the *Empire* architecture that gives to Leningrad so majestic a character does not come within the period with which he is concerned.

This sumptuous city constructed upon marshes and islands at the cost of countless lives might seem, to an excavator of five thousand years hence, the product of a peculiarly urbane society. In fact it reflected merely the parvenu ambitions of tyrants who were little more civilised than their groaning serfs. The Empresses Anne and Elizabeth enticed architects and milliners from Western Europe and ordered from them indifferently new palaces and new costumes. The boyars and their uncouth consorts were obliged to hold "assemblées," in which, like performing sea-lions, they mimicked the polite conversaziones of Paris and Versailles. The Empresses, no less than their moujik paramours, revelled in horseplay and violence; gilded caryatids gazed down upon potulent scuffles and broken noses. The Empress Elizabeth, because she fancied herself in male attire, obliged her courtiers to dress as women and their wives as men; so that the Ambassadors of the Western Powers had to dance weekly in brocaded panniers. The Empress Anne was more exigent. One of her nobles, Prince Galitsin, married an Italian lady and embraced the Catholic faith. The Empress, having discovered his secret, added him to her corps of buffoons.

> His duty was to be a hen; for this purpose Anne ordered a large basket, stuffed with straw hollowed into a nest and filled with eggs, to be placed conspicuously in one of the principal rooms of the palace. On this the Prince was condemned to sit, on pain of death, and to make himself as ridiculous as possible in public by going through the movements and vociferations of the hen.

Nor was the imperial anger appeased when his unhappy wife succumbed under the weight of this humiliation. The Prince was commanded to marry a Kalmuck remarkable for her ugliness, and the Empress turned the wedding into the most exorbitant joke known to history. In a cage on the back of an elephant the bridal pair were carried to a palace that had been specially constructed. This was made entirely of ice. Cannons of ice fired salvoes, dolphins of ice spouted blazing petroleum, and hollow pyramids of ice exhibited a revolving procession of obscene paintings. Within the palace was a dining-room containing a variety of foodstuffs fashioned of ice; a drawing-room with card-table, cards and counters, all of ice; a bedroom with four-poster bed, curtains, mattress, bedclothes and pillows of ice. Upon this couch the unhappy pair were deposited, naked except for nightcaps of ice, and there they spent the night, with guards to prevent their escape.

This pleasing incident occurred in the year 1740, when Bishop Berkeley and Voltaire were already middle-aged. If in recent years the Russians have occasionally shocked our sensibilities, a slight acquaintance with their history should have modified our bewilderment. Similarly the tale of the Empresses' passion for magnificence in architecture helps us to understand why Mr. Stalin wants the Palace of the Soviets to be half as high again as the Eiffel Tower, to be embellished with innumerable classical columns, and to be topped with a statue of Lenin hundreds of feet high. It is highly unjust to apply to our Russian allies the criterions of Western Europe; and in order to achieve the understanding of them that is so important to the future of the world, some knowledge of their past is essential. *Palmyra of the North* can be recommended, therefore, not only to amateurs of architecture but to all who interest themselves in the evolution of a mighty nation.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

IN PRAISE OF ENGLAND

What Have We to Defend? By E. F. M. DURBIN. *Routledge.* 5s.

Wherein lies the claim of this country upon the pride and affection of its inhabitants? In the fact that we happened to get a flying start in the industrial revolution and became, as a result, powerful, wealthy and secure? Possibly; yet to-day our power and our wealth are diminished and our security has disappeared. In our possession of the greatest Empire that the world has seen? Perhaps; yet that Empire is already eroded, and, it may well be will never in its old form, be restored. In our industrial ability and engineering skill? No doubt; yet to many of us, and those not the least articulate, these things mean but little. In our administrative ability and sense of justice? Now, I think, we are getting warm; yet the number of those engaged in the arts of administration, or the dispensation of justice, is comparatively small. For my part, I think that as it is in the art of politics that our greatest contribution to the civilisation of the West is to be found, so it is in the way of life of which our political system is at once the prop and the mirror that the claim of England to the affection of the English is most securely grounded. There are other nations who know more about the art of living than we do—the French, for example, and, I suspect, the Chinese—but I hope that it is not merely nationalist complacency that leads me to express the view that historians of the future, looking back on our troubled age, may find it in their hearts to say of us that we knew more about the art of living together in society than our contemporaries; that difficult art, of combining the minimum of uniformity which is necessary if society is to function at all, with the maximum scope for individual variety and the tolerance of individual differences.

This, in fact, is the burthen of Mr. Durbin's beautifully written and, at times, very moving little book. Inevitably it is a book of platitudes. There is not, I imagine, anything very new to be said about the English which the English do not already know—but platitudes pleasantly disguised and, at times, very gracefully dressed. The virtues

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upon which Mr. Durbin insists are the political ones—tolerance and kindliness and courage. These virtues are often counterfeited but with us they are genuine. For example, our tolerance arises not through indifference but through real kindliness. "We are united," Mr. Durbin writes, "in a community of a positive and creative affection—of love for one another—in turbulent brotherhood." This, I must say, seems to me to be pitching it a bit strong; Mr. Durbin sensing this hastens to defend his judgment by pointing, first, to the enormous increase in the scope and humanity of our social services as a result of which the State is enabled "to step, however imperfectly, into every British home in time of need—when babies are born, when young children need to be educated, when we are ill, when we are out of work, when we die," and, secondly, to the steps which this nation has habitually been the first to take to mitigate the harshness and diminish the injustice of man's treatment of his fellow men. Thus we were the first to abolish torture, to emancipate slaves, to reduce the severity of the criminal law: in short we are a gentle people.

We are even given marks for intelligence; our scientists, our philosophers are not to be despised, while our literature is as rich, as varied and as catholic as that of any other race: "We have led in the vanguard of the human mind."

This is a little disingenuous. The peaks of intelligence have been as high in England as elsewhere, but surely not the general level. Whereas in France a care for the things of the mind and the spirit is diffused in some degree through every stratum of society, with us there is a gulf between the few intellectuals and the many normals, a gulf across which the two parties survey one another with a surprise which on occasion hardens into contempt, the normals accepting the intellectuals only when they are dead, and the intellectuals resenting the refusal of the normals to accord them the respect to which, they feel, the superiority of their talents and intelligence is entitled; the good, in fact, are so harsh to the clever, the clever so rude to the good, which, as Cohen Portheim pointed out in his admirable books on England, is one of the reasons why English genius has tended to be eccentric, the great man having with us always to assert himself against the hostility or indifference of his environments and incidentally growing a little twisted in the process.

Mr. Durbin himself recognises this when he comes to talk of our faults which he groups under four heads: economic inequality, social inequality, vandalism and lack of imagination. It is because as a race we are indifferent to beauty that we have suffered our inheritance of natural loveliness to be debauched for private profit. Mr. Durbin writes very eloquently about the rape of the English countryside, affirming that "the period between the two European wars will stand out as one of the most destructive epochs in our history—a rival to the plundering neglect of the Tudors and the savagery of the Puritans." "We have treated our land as though we hated it." This is a true indictment and there is no excuse.

As to our lack of imagination, it is because our eyes are closed to the society "that does not yet exist," that we refuse to take the not very difficult steps that are necessary to end our inequalities of income and class and to enable us to reap the benefits with which science has potentially endowed mankind. Mr. Durbin is a gradualist. He sees that most men everywhere are in part wicked and in part stupid, and that it is no good trying to create societies which require much intelligence or morality for their maintenance. "Do you imagine," asked Socrates in the *Republic*, "that political institutions have any other motive force than the disposition of the citizens." Mr. Durbin agrees and insists that "a stable social order must take account of the intellectual limitations" of those who live under it.

We must not, then, expect too much; we must steer a middle course between the optimism which sees the light that isn't there and the pessimism which would put it out, a middle course, which, Mr. Durbin thinks, we are admirably equipped to follow. We shall, he believes, build a new society after the war without knowing that we are doing it—a society which is socialist, though we shall not call it that.

Reading Mr. Durbin's book one is suffused with a succession of blushes. He does say *such* things of us that there are times when one really feels a little embarrassed. This feeling of embarrassment is, I suppose, only the English way of saying "Yes" to Mr. Durbin's flattering estimate, for is not modesty one of the virtues for which he praises us? Let me say, then, that it is only my own experience of the judgments of refugees now in this country—they applaud us, I find, for precisely those political virtues which Mr. Durbin diagnoses, although they are too polite to join him in the detection of our faults—that emboldens me to endorse the bill that Mr. Durbin has presented as, on the whole, a true one.

C. E. M. JOAD

BARBARY

North Africa. By ALAN H. BRODRICK. *Oxford Press.* 3*s.* 6*d.*

Succinct without being dry, this small book provides the general reader with just the information he now requires about the geography, history, natural resources, administration and peoples of North Africa. Mr. Brodrick evidently knows the countries well; he likes the natives and does justice to the French. The King of Italy remarked in 1912, after the Italian occupation of Libya, "We have got the bone of the chop." And Mr. Brodrick points out that the Maghreb can, in fact, be likened to a huge loin chop of which "Morocco is the best meat, the narrow lands of Algeria and Tunisia the edible, sparse flesh on the bone, and Libya the bone itself, devoid of nourishment." The three countries of French North Africa are divided from the rest of the continent by desert and joined to Europe by the most navigable of seas. Historically and geographically, therefore, they belong to the European nexus. Though Islamic, the population has little Arab blood; anyone who has visited a Shleuh village will remember the blue eyes, reddish hair and positively Scottish appearance of many Berbers. While the urban population have habits largely similar to those of the inhabitants of Cairo and even Ispahan, the country people, especially in the mountains, retain pre-Islamic beliefs and customs. Tough, independent, and co-operative with his fellow-villagers, the Berber who has not been Arabised has been subjected to the most drastic natural selection by a climate remarkable for its capriciousness. An inevitable antipathy separates him from the man of the bazaars, and no autonomy will be practicable until this antagonism is removed.

The natural resources of the Maghreb are not great, nor are they such as to make autarky possible. The Upper Niger, on the other hand, runs through lands that irrigation would make immensely productive; and if the French scheme for bridging the desert with railways were to be realised, a very rich economy could be established.

The Italians, by their brutality, have halved the native population of Libya. Since the French occupation of Algeria, the native population has increased threefold. While Tunisia and Morocco are autocratically governed by the French, through the nominal power of a Dey and a Sultan, Algeria returns its own deputies to the *Chambre*. But the franchise is given only to such natives as

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are prepared to accept the *Code Napoléon*—to surrender, that is to say, their right to polygamous marriage and instantaneous divorce. Consequently the vast majority of the natives have refused naturalisation. There are strong nationalist movements in the North African cities, and Egypt with its king, constitution and autonomy offers an example that excites emulation. But the mass of the population has no such political consciousness. The French have done much to improve economic conditions; to have done more would probably have entailed high-handed and even tyrannical methods. But Mr. Brodrick is rightly severe upon the inordinate power of such capitalist interests as the *Banque de Paris et des Pays Bas.*

Since he finished his book, Allied victories have made one of his chapters out of date. There is now no need to consider the use Germans hoped to make of Northern Africa. We have given pledges to France that their African Empire shall be restored intact. These pledges must be honoured absolutely. Already before the war the French had been more successful in North Africa than we were in India, and it is reasonable to hope that a rejuvenated and progressive France, freed itself from the oppression of Big Business, will pursue in the Maghreb an enlightened policy.

Week-end Competitions

No. 668

Set by F. C. C.

Competitors are invited to produce a letter of not more than 200 words describing a visit paid by some character in fiction to another character in a book by a different, but roughly contemporary, author.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Monday, November 30th.

2. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 662

Set by Roderick Random

Popular psychologists sometimes prepare lists of questions for self-analysis so that readers can test whether they are extraverts or introverts. Competitors are asked to compile a set of seven such questions specially suitable to test any one of the following: A.T.S. Commandants, Black Marketeers, Senior Treasury Officials, Independent M.P.s, Writers of Strategy, Competition Setters, Popular Psychologists.

Report by Roderick Random

It was bad enough before I lost them; for I had already glanced at the answers and been horrified by the suppressed envy, malice, jealousy and aggression which the words "Competition Setter" released among the more experienced competitors. So that I am afraid there will be some disappointment at the news that the overcoat which I lost at the same time (and in the pocket of which I hoped to find the first set of answers) has turned up with the pockets empty. Apologetically, I now commend the competitors for the high level of their entries; there were many amusing sets of questions, and I wish I had space to quote more. Very honourable mentions go to Robert Upcot, D. W. Barker and B.T. Some of Joyce Johnson's punning put her among the runners-up, but I felt the joke was not well enough sustained. Leslie Johnson just failed against the prize winners, and Guy Innes, very sharp in a (to me) tender subject, was less apt in his general questions. The first prize goes to L.E.J. and the second to F.C.C. But before giving them here is an extract or two from the runners-up:

For Black Marketeers.

(1) When you first played Draughts, were you big enough to be above aboard?

(2) Have you ever
    (*a*) had a honey-baby?
    (*b*) been a sugar-daddy?
    (*c*) had a date with a Sultana?

(3) Does the term "fully fashioned" make you think of Mae West or three coupons?

(JOYCE JOHNSON)

(1) Would you sell your mother for £5—cash down?

(2) As you pass the Zoo do all the snakes take their hats off to you? (B.T.)

For A.T.S. Commandants.

(1) Was the Battle of Waterloo won on the playing fields of Roedean?

(2) Is the injunction "Put your trust in God and keep your powder dry" capable of ambiguous interpretation?

(3) Would the Amazonian amputation improve the efficiency of your women? (WIZZ)

(1) In addressing your Gals, do you use more frequently (*a*) we must, (*b*) you must.

(D. W. BARKER)

For Competition Setters.

(1) In your professional capacity do you (*a*) always, (*b*) more often than not, (*c*) occasionally, or (*d*) never use your real name?

(2) Do you view your avocation with (*a*) pride, (*b*) complacency, (*c*) cynical indifference, or (*d*) shame?

(3) Which of the following comments on your award strike you as the most offensive:
(*a*) I see he's given the prize to . . . again.
(*b*) I don't think he even tries to be fair.
(*c*) He ought to have said more clearly what he wanted.

(LESLIE JOHNSON)

(1) If you contracted the habit of losing the answers week after week, would you tell your mother, or keep it dark?

(2) When a fellow-setter recently lost a line or so (no great odds, of course) from the stanza he set for translation, did it leave you unmoved or did your thumbs prick?

(3) Would you favour advertising in the public prints for lost answers or would you content yourself with a hurried search in your personal haunts?

(4) If you and Allan M. Laing, otherwise Towanbucket, were on a desert island and you saw him first, would you advance to greet him or climb a tree?

(GUY INNES)

FIRST PRIZE

FOR A SENIOR TREASURY OFFICIAL

Introvert answers (a); Extravert answers (b)

(1) Sir Kingsley Wood joins you walking in St. James's Park.
Do you (*a*) try to look less tall?
(*b*) Talk about the ducks?

(2) You find yourself next to Lord Keynes at a man's dinner.
Do you (*a*) crumble your [illegible]
(*b*) forget to eat it?

(3) The Archbishop of Canterbury asks you if it isn't true that the Banks create credit.
Do you (*a*) try to change the subject?
(*b*) tell him you can't remember off-hand, but will look it up in Hartley Withers?

(4) You read that "Mr. Clarence Skinner was among the passengers on the New York Clipper."
Are you (*a*) indifferent?
(*b*) apprehensive?

(5) A letter in the *Times* from Sir Horace Wilson.
Do you (*a*) read it?
(*b*) skip it?

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(6) You are offered a job in the City at three times your present salary.

Do you (*a*) accept with glee?
(*b*) refuse with scorn?

(7) You are falling out of a window from the top storey of the Treasury.

Do you think (*a*) of your sins?
(*b*) "now for a bump"?

(L.E.J.)

SECOND PRIZE

For a Competition Setter

(1) Do you leave the setting of your competition to the last moment because you are so busy, and then ask someone else to take it to the last post?

(2) Have you to repress an impulse to set a competition which no one but yourself could possibly understand, or answer if they did?

(3) Do you frequently beg your friends or relations to tell you a good idea for a competition?

(4) Do you generally think the ideas your friends and relations insist on suggesting quite idiotic?

(5) If asked what subject you have set for next week, do you reply that it is very stupid and dull and would take too long to explain?

(6) Do you think that a large number of entries shows what an admirable setter you are, though you complain eloquently of the time and skill expended in judging them so carefully?

(7) If you mislay all the entries, do you coolly blame your pseudonym, instead of grovelling intimately from the heart to win the competitors' forgiveness?

If you say "yes" to (1), (3), (6) you are an Extrovert; if to (2), (4), (5), (7) you are an Introvert.

(F.C.C.)

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 665

Set by G. W. Stonier

The usual prizes are offered for the best poem of not more than 16 lines, on a favourite piece of music.

Report by G. W. Stonier

Competitors have sent in so many charming poems that I wish there were more space to display them. The least successful were the over-sentimental and the over-precise—the latter being, like programme-notes, more irritating than helpful. Beethoven symphonies and quartets came first in popularity, and after them Mozart, Bach, Schubert, Debussy, Handel, Chopin, and the Londonderry Air. In one or two cases there were already originals to vie with, and I can't pretend that the new verses for *L'Après-midi d'un faune* and *Façade* provided adequate postscripts to Mallermé and Miss Sitwell. John C. Smith found an unexpected equivalent for Debussy's *La Mer* in Hopkinsese. On the whole, though, the level was high, and competitors are to be congratulated on their taste and skill. Prizes to be equally divided among T. St. George, Sylvia Tatham, Robert Upcott, F. C. C., and Ignotus. The runners-up, "Spain," Edwin Allan and V. I. Longman, came very close.

PRIZES.

Siciliano. Scarlatti. (*Andantino.*)

O whence are these maidens dancing, dancing, dancing
over a flowery lea?
And who are these shepherds fluting, fluting, fluting a
haunting melody?
They follow the flocks with fleece of snow
And milky kine who warily go
Slowly, slowly, leisurely, leisurely through white-
walled city to azure sea,
From flowery land to a silver strand:
Fair island of Sicily!

But a restless breeze springs up from the sea,
The music falls to a minor key;
The sheep are sheared of their glistening wool,
And the shepherds haste to the wrestling school,
While the maidens turn the wheel to the full;
Sad island of Sicily!

But the dancing, dancing, fluting, fluting will surely
some day come back to thee,
Glad island of Sicily! (Silvia Tatham)

Fruhlingsglaube.

Nun muss sich alles wenden.

Here are the Schubert Lieder Now begin!
First the accompaniment
Heart-known and Heaven-sent,
Making the secret spirit laugh with delight,
It is so divinely right.
And now the fountain of the melody.

To that forgiven home you have let me in—
Spring of my adolescence, Spring of the world,
Where every tiniest lime-leaf is unfurled;
Yet more and more's to be.

All things are new. No grief can come again;
All's green; all's flowering.
Then, why this pain?
O enemy alien heart, because we fear
That you're possessed, possessed for evermore,
Whilst we deny that in these songs—that here
Is your unchanged, unchangeable, innocent core.

(F.C.C.)

On a Favourite Piece of Music.

The horn tune purples on, a smouldering line,
Now rising, rising to a fitful shine,
Falling then to a glow.

The slowly tinkling harp notes wind along,
A firefly troop, up, over, down, among
Gold ladders spaced below.

And, as I listen, on an evening wind,
Seeming to blow, comes back the heart I've
sinned
And commonplaced away.

—The distant cry over a sullen marsh
Comes thralling-sad upon me, in this harsh,
Central, high light of day.

(Ignotus)

Piano Concerto No. 2 in C Minor

By Rachmaninoff.

House-serfs and footmen pass
Among the guests, and carriages
Stand in the snow before the house
Of Prince Kuragin.
And the Princess at the stair-head
Receives her guests, the Kuragin diamonds—
Cut in Amsterdam long before she was born—
Glittering on her scented skin.
The orchestra (which cost the Prince three
villages)
In its flower-filled bower,
Fills the eyes of the old men with tears,
And of the young girls with ecstasy.
And outside in the bitter sky,
The moon, grown foppish too,
Their gilded melancholy feeds.

(Robert Upcott)

Chopin Nocturne.

Open the casement. You will see
Stretched out, the nineteenth century.

To the marmoreal mountain
Where lives the distant princess
Seven huntsmen go riding, riding
Over the lake of glass.

There is the King of Thule
Who goes hunting alone.
The wind brims the hollow shells
That round the lake are thrown

But behind, here are the dancers,
In white, like a swan's feather.
They are dancing a gay mazurka.
Roses and swans together

Far in the distance lie the inscrutable years.
Turn from the window: those are to-morrow's
fears. (T. St. George)

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